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# PLUCK AND LUCK

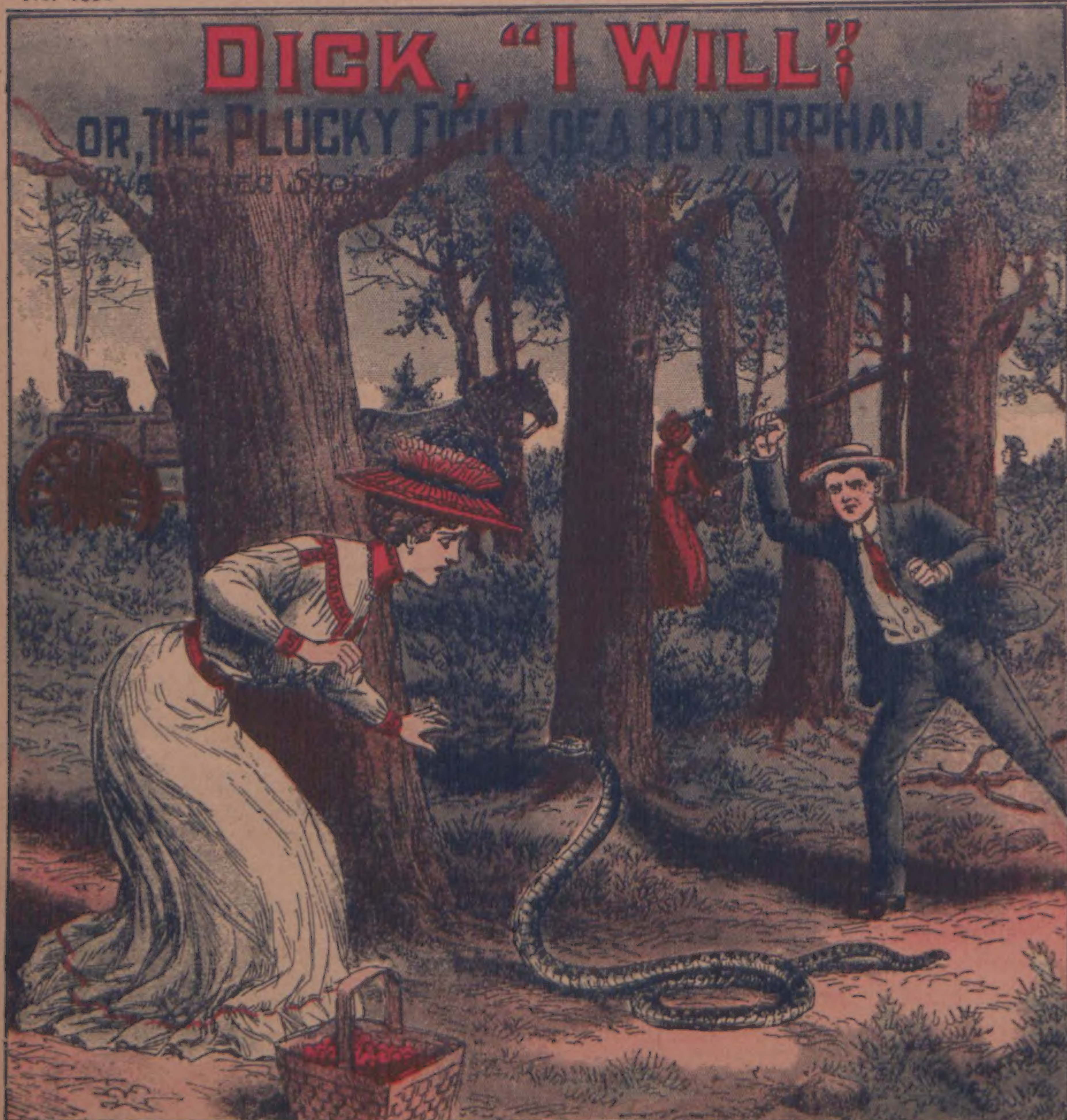
## STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

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Never stopping to think what the result might be, he gathered his muscles together, and with a swift, agile bound was upon the hideous serpent. His face was actually bloodless—his eyes gleaming—his teeth set.







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## PLUCK AND LUCK

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# DICK "I WILL"

## OR, THE PLUCKY FIGHT OF A BOY ORPHAN

By ALLYN DRAPER

### CHAPTER I.—The Hallowe'en Party.

"Oh, Della, I am so glad to see you! We have been waiting for you, wondering what could possibly detain you. What was the matter?"

The speaker, Edith Cross, better known among a number of girls with whom she was not at all popular, as "Cross Edith," smiled sweetly at pretty Della Cornell, the minister's only daughter, at the same time holding up her face as if expecting a kiss. But Miss Cornell very coolly gave her the tips of her fingers, for she knew that the black eyed Edith cherished no particular love for her, in spite of her sweet, honeyed words.

"I stopped on my way here to see Jane Stone, who is very ill," Della answered in her clear, ringing voice, "and——"

She got no further, for Edith interrupted her with a little shriek.

"Oh, Della, how could you go into that dreadful tumbledown hovel?" she cried, holding up both hands. "She may have some terrible disease that we are all likely to catch. I am so nervous about it, that I shall not get over it during the entire evening."

"I would not worry if I were in your place, Edith," Della replied, quietly. "There is not the slightest danger of you ever suffering from Jane's malady, for she has—brain fever!"

A suppressed titter went around among the boys and girls, for not one of them liked Edith Cross, while Della Cornell was beloved by rich and poor, young and old, high and low. The former's black eyes glittered with an angry light, but she managed to smile. Della was as quiet and serene as ever. A manly youth, whose frank, pleasant face was indicative of his character, came forward to greet the new-comer, his gray eyes telling but too plainly what she was to him.

"We are all here now, save Dick," he said, holding her hand a trifle longer than was really necessary. "I wonder what is keeping him?"

"Oh, he was hanging around the barn the last I saw of him," a slender blonde youth drawled. "He had to finish his work before he could come, and father had something extra for him to do to-night."

"Then why didn't you stay and help him so he would not keep us waiting?" Della Cornell asked somewhat sharply. "For you know we never begin anything unless Dick is here."

Walter Jones, for that was the name of the shallow looking boy who had spoken so slightly of the absent one, flushed hotly, but he said nothing. He was the only child of Nathan Jones, the richest farmer in that part of Vermont, and he had made up his mind long ago to win pretty Della Cornell, the minister's daughter, who was a general favorite in the small town of Burrville, a flourishing hamlet nestling in the midst of the green Vermont hills. Both father and son were thoroughly disliked, but money will speak for itself, and many a pretty failing was overlooked on that account.

"I fail to see Miss White. Is she too detained?" Frank Spencer, the young man who had first addressed Della Cornell, remarked inquiringly, looking at Edith Cross. "It seems as if half the company had taken their departure when she and Dick are absent. She will be with us soon, I hope?"

Edith's face burned, but there was nothing for her to do but answer his question.

"She has not been feeling well for a few days, and mamma thought the excitement of to-night might prove too much for her, so she had her retire," she replied in a rather embarrassed tone of voice. "She believed a rest would do her more good."

"Nonsense," Della said briskly. "A jolly evening will do more to cheer her up and drive away the blues than a rest. Besides I want to see Hope. She is the dearest girl in all the world, and I suppose the poor child is lonesome."

"I see no reason why she should be lonesome," Edith remarked, stiffly. "I am sure she has a home good enough for any poor girl; in fact, better than she has ever known before in all her life. She should feel deeply grateful to papa, but I am sorry to say that she does not appear to appreciate it."

"Perhaps she appreciates it more than she cares to tell," she said, slowly. "She is very quiet and reserved, you know, and then she has not been with you very long."



## CHAPTER II.—The Face of One who Was Destined To Be Her Fate.

While our hero's friend and the young girl he was so fond of, were awaiting his arrival in the luxurious drawing room of Major Cross, the boy himself was busy finishing his work about the premises of Farmer Jones, the selfish, hard-hearted man who grudgingly gave him a home for the labor he exacted of him.

"It seems to me that there is always something extra for me to do whenever I want to go anywhere," he muttered, pitching the fragrant hay before the long line of eager cattle. "And if it were any other boy, he would give it up. But I will get through this work and be there in time for the game. Yes, yes, Princess Bonnie, I am coming," in answer to a low whinny of impatience. "Please don't break your manger all to pieces."

Half an hour later, his labors finished, dressed in his best clothes, and they were plain enough, he was on his way to the scene of the Hallowe'en party, a distance of nearly four miles, for the village of Burrville was situated between the two farms, one lying on either side. He did not mind that, whoever, for he was a fast walker, and he covered the ground rapidly. At the foot of a long, steep hill ran the railroad, and a dangerous place it was, too, for a runaway horse coming down that hill was sure to meet with death. It would take a giant's arm to stop a maddened animal in time to save it from an awful fate.

Suddenly a pair of horses coming at a terrible pace appeared before him, and at the very moment the shrill, sharp whistle of the last passenger train that stopped at Burrville, sounded upon the chill night air. A thrill of terror struck through the boy's heart, for how could he alone stop those two maddened, fiercely plunging beasts? It was impossible. Nearer and nearer they came. Louder and louder grew the rumble of the approaching train. And then Dick caught sight of a white, horrified face from which every spark of life or hope seemed to have fled. That settled it. His mind was made up, and taking his stand in the middle of the road, he set his teeth tightly together.

By the bright moonlight he saw the occupant of the carriage was a man of middle age, with snow white mustache. The reins were hanging loose over the dashboard, for he was hopeless from fright. Another second and they would be upon him. But he was ready for them, and with one mighty bound he was at their heads, his nerves and muscles like iron. His strong hands clutched their bridles, and it seemed as if all the strength in his body was concentrated in his hands and arms. There was a struggle, short, brief yet terrific, between man and beast—a determined battle between human strength and brute strength, but the former conquered, and trembling in every nerve, the horses crouched back upon their haunches, cowed, awed, subdued by the youth, who looked fearlessly into their eyes. A moment later he gave the reins into the driver's hands.

"You need have no fear of their running away again, sir," he said, politely. "They are quiet enough now."

"By Heaven, boy! but you are the bravest hero I ever knew of!" the stranger exclaimed, looking admiringly at the young man. "How can I ever repay you for what you have done this night?"

"I want no pay, sir," Dick said, coldly. "I am amply paid by knowing that I have saved your life."

"But, my boy, I cannot let it go in this manner. I want——"

He was talking to the air, for Dick had disappeared. His tall, athletic figure was vanishing swiftly up the hill.

"It seems that I am doomed to be insulted for everything I do," he said to himself. "If I save a life, I am asked how much I want for it. Other boys are not treated in that way. But in spite of them all, in spite of the fact that old Farmer Jones took me from the Orphan's Home, I will yet arise above them all, I will compel them to treat me with respect."

He was destined to meet with another adventure ere he reached his destination. Passing through a small grove in whose quiet depths a silver stream rippled, he was attracted by what he supposed was something bright and golden, but a second glance revealed the truth to him. It was the shining yellow of a young girl's head, and the silver moonbeams touched it to a living, burning gold. It was Hope, our dainty heroine, and on her way to Burrville she had paused to kneel down beside the murmuring waters, more in a spirit of curiosity than anything else. Her heart was heavy, for her life had been so empty, so lonely that she felt keenly the position she held in the Cross household. Little did he dream that to-night life would change for her, that through the dark clouds of sorrow, the golden sunshine of pure joy would shine. Suddenly she started. Mirrored in the depths of the stream the young girl beheld a handsome, boyish face—the face of one who was destined to be her fate.

## CHAPTER III.—Brave Dick "I Will."

Dick had stolen upon her and looked over her shoulder, thus she beheld his face in the shimmering, moon-filtered waters. Her heart gave a great leap, then seemed to stand still in a new and sudden terror, for it suddenly dawned upon her that she was alone in the grove, and the face she saw was that of a stranger, a flesh and blood mortal, not a mere vision as she had at first imagined.

He spoke first, yet he felt his heart throbbing faster than usual.

"I beg your pardon," he said, with a low bow. "I did not mean to interrupt you, but when I saw your hair glistening in the moonlight, I was puzzled as to what it might be, for I could not see your face, you know, and your hair looked like spun gold."

"I suppose you think I am very foolish," she murmured shyly, her eyes hidden by the snowy silken fringed lids. "But you know it is Hallowe'en, and in a sudden spirit of fun I knelt beside the brook, for they say——"

"That the maiden sees the face of the one who is destined to be her fate," he interrupted gently, noticing her embarrassment and kindly coming



to her aid. "And, what a fortunate chap I am. But speaking of Hallowe'en, that reminds me that I am on my way to a Hallowe'en party. I must say, however, that I would prefer to remain here."

"It is at the home of Major Cross," he went on, "and since we have met in this strange, romantic way, don't you think we ought to know each other's names? Now you may be a fairy princess, a wood nymph in disguise, for all I know, but my name is plain Richard Barker, better known as Dick I Will," because I am such a stubborn wretch, who——"

"So you are Dick I Will," and I meet you for the first time?" she exclaimed in open delight. "I have heard of you for nearly a year, and I have always wanted to know you, but it happened that I never had the opportunity. I live with Major Cross, you know. My name is Hope White."

"Hope White!" he echoed, in surprise. "Why, my dear old friend, Frank Spencer, is always talking about you and singing your praises. Are you a relative of Major Cross?"

"No; I—I am given a home for my services about the house, and act as Edith's maid," she answered, a hot blush staining even her brow, while her voice trembled. "I have no parents, no friends, no home, and—and they are very kind indeed."

"I, too, am alone in the world," he said, softly. "I am given a home with Farmer Jones for my work on and about the farm. The old saying that misery loves company, seems to be true, for we are both in the same position. But let us hope that better days will come, and soon, too. Were you on your way home?"

"No, I am going to Burrville on an errand for Mrs. Cross," she replied, touched by his gentleness. "She discovered at the last moment that she had no vanilla in the house, and she always uses it to season her ice cream."

"I am going with you," was his cool answer. "I should not care to have a sister of mine out alone in these woods at night. We shall be back in time for the games."

She said no more, and to tell the truth she was glad of his company. They laughed and chatted merrily as they walked along in the soft, October moonlight, so by the time they reached Burrville, they felt like old-time friends. The vanilla Mrs. Cross had been so much in need of at the last moment, was purchased, and they started homeward. Strange to relate, the distance between the village store, and Major Cross' home, appeared to have lengthened, for it required about twice the usual time to walk it. It was amusing to see Edith Cross when the youthful couple walked into the house half an hour later. Her black eyes flashed, but she smiled sweetly as she gave Dick her hand.

"We were beginning to give you up, Dick," she said pleasantly. "What detained you?"

"I met Miss White on her way to the village, and I walked back with her," he answered politely. "It was rather late for her to be out alone, and she was kind enough to allow me to accompany her. I am sorry to have kept you waiting, but I know you will forgive me this time."

"I will forgive you this once, Dick," and she pressed his hand slightly. "Hope," turning to the young girl, "mamma would like the vanilla now."

"You surely would not deprive us of the pleasure of your society, Miss White," Dick called after the fair girl as she started to leave the room. "We shall not begin our games until you return."

Edith was beaten, and she had to submit gracefully, for she saw the smiles upon the faces of several, and she did not want to be the laughing stock of her guests. In a few moments Hope returned, and the fun and frolic began.

My dear young readers, I will not weary you by a description of the games of Hallowe'en, for really all of them are known to you. But the greatest interest was entered in the big silver basket of great red-cheeked apples, that were brought in later in the evening. And a great shout went up from the boys and girls when pretty Hope carefully pared one of the juicy beauties, throwing the long, ribbon-like strand over her shoulder, for the letters formed by the bright, red apple peeling, were the initials of the hero of the evening—brave Dick "I Will."

#### CHAPTER IV.—Alone, and Cast Upon the World.

There upon the floor, plain, crimson, glowing, lay the three letters, D. I. W. And the young man for whose name they stood, felt his heart throb faster. Boy though he was, he felt from the moment his eyes rested upon the sweet, flower-like face of Hope White, that fate had intended them for each other.

"Your initials, Dick," Della Cornell cried gleefully, clapping her hands as she spoke. "See how gracefully the letters are curved. Did you ever know of such a strange thing? They are not R. B. standing for Richard Barker, but just plain D. I. W. And that is the name by which you are best known. Now, don't tell me that that there isn't something strange and mystic about Hallowe'en, for I know better, and then the apple peelings tell this story."

"Since you take such an interest in Hallowe'en sports and games, Miss Della, suppose you try and see what a simple little apple peeling will do for you," our hero retorted. "Here is the largest, finest apple in the basket," handing her one of the juicy, red-cheeked beauties.

In a short time she had finished peeling the apple, and with her bright eyes meeting Dick's defiantly, she tossed the long red satiny strip over her shoulder. An instant later and the big room with its old-fashioned fireplace resounded to the merry shouts of laughter coming from the throats of every boy and girl present, for the letters lying in bold relief against the background of the velvet carpet were F. S. The spirited girl, although she was embarrassed, had too much sense to allow any of her thoughtless companions to see it. She joined in the laugh with them, thus one half of the pleasure at her expense was lost.

Edith Cross hoped that our hero would offer to escort her to the dining room, but he did not, and she was furious when she saw him give his arm to Hope, with a bow that would have done credit to a Chesterfield. I need not add that Frank Spencer was Della's escort. The long table in the big dining room fairly groaned under the weight of good things with which it was spread. It was



an evening never to be forgotten, and there were at least four happy young people who remembered it as long as they lived. So did Edith Cross, for it was the death of her fond dreams. In spite of her selfishness she had a heart, and she had given it unasked, unsought, to handsome Dick "I Will." But he thought only of Hope, the golden haired girl, whose face he beheld that night for the first time.

My dear young readers, I will not weary you by giving the details of that Hallowe'en party. Suffice to say that it was a success, and every one present enjoyed it hugely. All save the youthful hostess, and her heart was full of envy and bitter jealousy to think of enjoying anything. If wishes could have killed dainty Hope, she would never have lived to enjoy that brief hour at the garden gate with the boy whom she realized was her fate.

"Good-night, Hope, for you will let me call you Hope, I know," Dick whispered, holding her hand, while the soft mellow October moonlight bathed her beautiful face and golden head in a flood of glory. "I shall see you again, for we are going to be the best of friends. And better days are in store for us both."

Hope was about to speak, when the sharp, disagreeable voice of Mrs. Cross sounded upon her ear.

"Hope, Hope White, come into the house this instant!" she called out. "Whatever do you mean by staying out in the cold night dampness and at this late hour? Come right in!"

With a hasty good-night to our hero, the young girl obeyed the call, knowing full well that she would have a very unpleasant interview when Mrs. Cross met her. And she was right. No sooner had the hall door closed behind her, than that lady said furiously:

"You bad, wicked girl you, how dare you disgrace yourself while you are in my house, and openly insult my daughter? I want you to leave the shelter of my roof at once, do you hear? You shall not sleep here another night. Sleep in the fields, if you like, it matters but little to me. In the morning you may come back and get your few miserable rags. Here, throw this about your shoulders," tossing her a thin, worn shawl. "But go, go, go! You shall not breathe the same air with my pure Edith. Oh, how I hate you!"

Thus poor Hope was rudely thrust out into the night without a dollar in her pocket, or even warm clothing to protect her from the chill autumn night.

## CHAPTER V.—A New Friend.

Edith Cross, treacherous, jealous, spiteful, had watched Dick all the evening, and it maddened her to see how devoted he was to Hope. At last she could not control herself, thus her tale of woe was poured into her mother's ears. The echo of the heavy hall door rang through the house, causing the chandeliers to tremble, and then, as the faint sounds died away, the heartless woman, who had turned a young girl adrift upon the cold world to suffer alone, unaided, listened, but heard no sorrowful voice pleading for admittance to the home

which had been so grudgingly given her, she said to her daughter, in her hard, cold voice:

"Go upstairs to your room, Edith. She will not trouble us again. In the morning if she comes back after her clothes, she shall have them, but I would not allow her to sleep beneath my roof again for a single hour. Of all the ungrateful creatures that I ever saw, she is certainly the worst."

"She will never have a chance to meet Richard Barker again while she is under my roof," Edith ground out between her set teeth. "The impudent ungrateful thing. I feel like boxing her ears whenever I think of her. And he acted like a fool over her just because she happens to have a wax doll face and silly blue eyes. I thought he had more sense than that."

"And I thought you had more sense than to fall in love with a beggar," her mother chimed in, her sharp voice sounding sharper and more disagreeable than ever. "For Richard Barker is nothing but a beggar in spite of his handsome face. And the airs and graces that he uses. It is really enough to make any one sick. For my part, I fail to see anything wonderful in him. He is not my style at all. I can tell you that when I was a girl, it took something beside a handsome face and an empty pocket to catch me."

"Well, I don't see that you did such a wonderful thing after all," mamma's very dutiful daughter answered, with a shrug of her plump shoulders. "for papa is just about as poor as they make 'em at present, and——"

"You may go to your room, Edith, and remain there until you learn to address me in a more respectful tone," and Mrs. Cross walked slowly across the floor in what she considered her queenliest manner. "I am more than surprised at you."

The young lady did not answer her save by a shrug of the shoulder, but tossing her head, retired to her dainty chamber. And while she nestled warmly beneath the soft, silken coverlet, dreaming of the young man who never gave her even one solitary thought, poor Hope stood alone in the chill autumn night, her heart sore and bruised, her red lips quivering, while the great hot tears rolled down her cheeks like pearls. She was dazed by the sudden shock. She could not as yet hardly realize it. Homeless and friendless! Those two words rang in her ears like a knell. She did not have a roof to shelter her from the night, not a dollar in her pocket with which to purchase one. In her sorrow and terror she had forgotten all about her kind friend Della. She suddenly thought of her, and a ray of hope entered her breast.

"Della will give me a home, oh, I know she will!" she murmured, and drawing the folds of the worn shawl closer about her, she started briskly toward the village. "Ah, how thankful I am to have such a friend in the hour of need."

She had taken but a few steps when the sharp clatter of iron-shod hoofs, finally accompanied by the roll of wheels, struck upon her ear. At first she was somewhat startled, and she looked about her, wondering where she could conceal herself until the vehicle had passed. But there was no place near enough for her to reach, so she walked on, although her heart throbbed fiercely. The horse was close behind her now, and the driver



drew rein. It was something unusual to see a young girl on the public highway at that late hour.

"Do you know that it is very dangerous for such a young girl as you are to be out alone to-night," a man's musical voice asked kindly. "I should dislike very much to see a daughter of mine out so late. If you will tell me where you are bound, I will take you safely to your destination. Do not be afraid to trust me, for I live near here. My name is Richard Cadwell, and I live at at Pines."

"You are very kind," Hope answered, timidly. "And I will accept your offer. I am going to the Rev. Joseph Cornell's. My name is Hope White, and I lived at—at Major Cross' until to-night. Now, I—I have no home, sir, if they do not wish me to stay at the clergyman's house."

He looked at her keenly as he helped her into the light buggy beside him, and he understood the situation at once, for he knew the pretty golden-haired child, as he called her, had been very unhappy in the home of Major Cross.

#### CHAPTER VI.—A Generous Offer—An Unkind Refusal.

He was silent for an instant, his straight brows meeting in a line, then he said, briefly:

"Yes, I have heard of Major Cross, in fact I know him quite well. So you have left his home? Tell me why, my child. Did you feel in the way there? Were you not happy?"

"They did not wish me to remain longer," she answered, bravely, trying to shield the woman who was so unkind to her. "I—do not think they liked too large a family, and I made one too many."

Loyal little Hope! She would not even betray the one who had treated her unkindly, unjustly. And Richard Cadwell could read her heart and thoughts like an open book. He said nothing, however, and in a short time they reached the home of the minister who was so well liked by the people of Burrville. They had retired, but it did not take long to awaken them.

"You poor child, of course you shall come here," Della exclaimed when Hope meekly asked her for shelter. "Come right in. I thought there would be trouble there to-night. I saw it brewing, and I half expected something like this, but I hardly thought she would go so far as to turn you out into the night. I always knew she was hard-hearted, but this beats me."

The minister himself welcomed her, and Richard Cadwell drove away well satisfied with Hope's friends and her new home. Now to return to our hero. He too was in a happy frame of mind when he reached home after the Hallowe'en party. He forgot that he was bound out to Farmer Jones until he was twenty-one—forgot that he was penniless, homeless, without a dollar to his name, for he felt rich and proud as a king. The way to success and riches seemed open before him, and so easy, so pleasant to traverse.

He slept soundly that night, and his dreams were very pleasant ones. He was up bright and early the next morning, busily at work as usual,

when in the barn the farmer appeared, his face heavy and sullen.

"Walter told me last night, after he got home, that you acted like a fool," was the first greeting, "and I thought 'twas a foolish thing for you to go to such a place, when you ain't used to high-toned society. You know you're only a bound boy, and that makes a pile of difference."

Dick's face flushed hotly, and he bit his under lip. The tone in which the words were spoken, was worse than the words. They cut like the sharp thrust of a knife.

"You are right," he said, very slowly and distinctly, his clear eyes meeting the shifting gray ones of the farmer. "You are right. I am only a bound boy, that is true, and I am not used to good society, for where have I ever been to meet people of refinement? My life has been spent on this farm, my days in toiling faithfully for you."

Farmer Jones gasped.

"Look here, young man," he said, gruffly. "If you don't keep a civil tongue in your head, I'll give you a taste of the strap. You ain't too old yet for it, and you're in my hands for two years yet. I'll learn you some manners before long."

It was that very afternoon that Farmer Jones was surprised to receive a visit from the rich owner of The Pines. He had seen him before, but had never spoken with him, therefore he felt quite honored at being noticed by so distinguished a man.

"Good-afternoon, Mr. Jones," he said, kindly. "I have often seen you in the village, and have admired your farm in passing by. It shows that a careful hand is at the helm."

"Well, yes, it does look pretty fair, that's a fact," the farmer answered, proudly. "It shows that I don't have any lazy sticks on my place, but I've got to keep right behind 'em all the time."

"Of course, of course," was the hearty reply. "But we all have to do that. Now, I called here to-day to make you an offer. You have in your employ, a boy by the name of Richard Barker, have you not?"

"Yes, he's bound out to me," was the reply given with tightly pursed-up lips.

"I like him, and I would be glad to pay you for his time during the next two years," Richard Cadwell continued pleasantly. "For the money you would be able to employ a strong man who would do more work, and I will send the boy to a good school for a number of years. When he is done, he will be ready to make his way in the world, and who knows but what he may win fame and fortune! Name your price, and the money is yours."

Nathan Jones shook his head. His eyes glittered greedily, for he dearly loved money, but he would not yield.

"No, sir," he said. "Keep your money, and I'll keep Dick. Go to school indeed! The best school for him is in the stables, where he belongs."

#### CHAPTER VII.—"Be Brave; Be Patient."

Richard Cadwell stared at the farmer, for never in all his life had he heard such a disagreeable voice, nor witnessed such a light of narrow, petty



meanness as the one that shone in the eyes of Nathan Jones.

"Why, I thought you would surely be glad to give the boy a chance," he said in a puzzled tone. "There is a remarkable future before him if he is given a chance; he will make a brilliant career for himself. I tell you that I have a great admiration for him, and I would do almost anything to help him along. I feel as much interested in him as though he were my own son."

In the meantime Dick "I Will" had come upon the scene and had heard part of the discussion relating to himself.

"Well, he'll have to make his future and his career for himself, and he'll have to start it out here in the barn, for that's about all the school he'll see for the next two years," the farmer chuckled. "He's a mighty good worker, Dick is. I never knew him to shirk, only he's got too big ideas for a bound boy. No, I ain't going to let him go. I need him."

"Well, Mr. Jones, we will not argue upon the question," and the dark eyes good-naturedly met the farmer's gray ones. "My only object now, is to see if I cannot win you over regarding this boy. I will even double the amount, and I will see that he either has a profession, or if he prefers business, I will start him in business, whatever he may fancy. First of all, however, he must have an education."

"I tell you that you are only wasting time," the farmer said doggedly, growing more stubborn and set every moment. "He belongs to this farm, and here he's going to stay for the next two years. Now, there ain't one bit of use in arguing with me, for I never give in."

His manner was so insolent that it fired Dick's blood. He managed to control himself for a moment; then he could do so no longer.

"See here, Nathan Jones," he said, in a clear firm voice, turning upon the farmer. "You have had your say, now I will have mine. I shall remain here two years longer, for during that period I belong to you. After that we are strangers. While I am in your employ, I shall work faithfully. I shall not grumble, but I shall yet cause you to open your eyes in wonder. I will make a name, a place in the world for myself. Two years is not so very much to lose out of a life, yet it is more than I care to lose. What can't be cured, though, must be endured."

"I have a good mind to give you a taste of that strap, boy," the farmer muttered, glaring at the youth who dared speak his mind plainly. "And for two cents I'd do it, too!"

"Better not, Mr. Jones," was the quiet answer. "I would not try if it were you. I have got to be a trifle too large for that sort of thing, don't you know?"

Richard Cadwell spoke to Dick then, holding out one hand.

"Well, my boy, I am sorry that my plans failed, but let us hope for the best, and two years is not a lifetime. After they have passed away we shall do something, and you must be brave and keep up a stout heart during those years. We are not the only ones who have to wait. Be brave, be patient!"

"I will!" Dick answered promptly. "I will!"

Nathan Jones had nothing to say after Richard

Cadwell had taken his departure. Dick was greatly surprised, for he had expected to get a severe lecture, but he was agreeably disappointed.

Walter said nothing to him either, but he knew from the grin upon his face and the leer in his eyes that his father had told him all. Our hero never let on that he noticed it, keeping steadily at his work as if nothing had happened. He set his teeth, firmly resolving not to let them cause him to lose his patience. And they both soon saw that they would gain nothing by the course they had at first mapped out to follow, so wisely held their peace. Day after day passed on, nothing unusual happening to disturb their tranquil calm, and at last came a holiday that was greeted with joyful eagerness, not only by the boys of the neighborhood, but the men as well were pleased. It was the grand hunt that took place every year. To be sure the game was small, nearly all squirrels and a few stray rabbits or birds, and once in a great while a fox was scared from cover. But so far no one had ever seen a deer in the woods about Burrville.

The eventful day dawned, cold, sharp, frosty, just the kind of weather for a tramp through the woods or a run over the hills. They were to meet at Nathan Jones' house early in the morning, and start from there. In the evening there would be the supper and the dance. There was not a single man in the party who really liked the farmer, but he had money, and a certain amount of influence. And this year it was his turn to entertain the hunters. The rosy sunshine of the bracing autumn morn was just beginning to peep through a midst of clouds, when amidst much laughter and many jokes, the party started off over the hills in search of their day's sport. Dick was with the party, of course, and so was Robert. The farmer had intended leaving our hero at home to superintend the work on the farm, and he had his own reasons for not wishing our hero to be one of the hunting party. He was a crack shot, and the honors of the day would be showered upon him.

The hunt was a great success. Never before had the woods seemed to be so full of both red and gray squirrels, with now and then a stray back beauty. There were quite a number of rabbits, too, and a few lucky marksmen shot some quail. Dick's gamebag was half full before some of the others brought down a single thing. Always an expert with rifle or revolver, to-day he appeared to be charmed, and sent mystic bullets speeding through the air. At noon they halted, and building a huge fire, had their lunch. Then they were off again, each one eager to win the coveted medal. After supper would come the counting of the bushy tails in the different gamebags, the presentation of the medal, and then, last of all, the dance. The girls could hardly control their impatience, so eager were they for the first waltz, and it was with a sigh of relief that they viewed the men arise from the table.

## CHAPTER VIII.—A Wicked Scheme Exposed.

Shouts of laughter filled the air as the contents of the different gamebags were emptied, for it told the skill of some of the farmers as marksmen. One man's bag, who always boasted that he never



missed a shot in his life, was found to contain the tails of two chipmunks, and so went. But Dick had beaten them all. In fact they all expected he would win the medal, many of them having seen him shoot before. Walter Jones came next, and he had one thing in his gamebag that not another in the party could boast of—a black squirrel's tail. There had been but one killed during the day, and it was his rifle that brought it down. Apparently his face wore a very proud and happy smile as he stepped forward and laid the leathern pouch upon the table, but a close and keen observer would have noticed a queer expression in his light, gray eyes. Proudly opening the bag, he laid out, one by one, the bushy trophies of the hunt, reserving his treasure for the last. Suddenly his face grew a bit grave, then graver still, and finally quite serious. The black tail of which he was so proud was not there!

"Where can it have gone?" he asked them all. "You know I was the only one who shot a black squirrel, and I wanted to show his tail last. It is not in my bag, and yet where can it have gone?"

No one knew. They looked at each other, but said nothing, and then Dick brought his game bag forward to empty. Out rolled a pile of red, fluffy tails, followed by long plumes of silver gray, and then, last of all, its sombreness all the plainer because of others surrounding it, came the black squirrel's tail!

Dick was more surprised than any of the others. He stood staring at it as if it had been a snake, while the other men looked at him, then at one another. How did it come to be in his bag, they asked in subdued whispers.

Our hero was the first one to speak. Dazed, mystified, but never dreaming that they suspected him of being dishonest, he turned to Walter, asking in a low voice:

"Is that your black squirrel's tail, Walter? How did it ever get in my bag?"

Walter mumbled, not playing his part as well as he had intended. "I put that tail in my gamebag, and the next thing I find it in yours. I can't answer as to how it got there. You must do that."

For the first time it dawned upon Dick that he was suspected of having stolen the tail.

"See here, Walter Jones," he said in a low, suppressed voice. "Do you dare infer that I stole your wretched old squirrel's tail? From the tone in which you speak, and the way you look at me, I know that you do. Now, come out and be a man. Don't play the part of a sneak."

"Well, Dick, I don't see any reason why you should get mad and jump on me in that way," Walter begun, but Dick cut him short.

"That will do," he said, crisply. "I want you to answer my question, and no beating about the bush. Say either yes or no. I am not going to wait very long, and if you refuse to answer me, but keep on with that infernal hinting, I'll break your head!"

"Don't you dare insult me under my own roof!" blustered the cowardly Walter, for at heart he was a coward. "Remember, please, that you are in my father's house, and he will never stand this."

"Suppose we make a thorough investigation," Dick said, with white lips. "This is too serious a

matter to let rest, and I will have my name cleared! It is too deep a stain to let die!"

At that instant one of the farm hands, attracted by the sound of loud, angry voices, came to the door and listened to what was going on. His face suddenly brightened when he learned what it was about, and coming forward he said respectfully:

"If you please, sir, Mister Dick wasn't near the game bags this night, for when they came in from the hunt, I took every bag and carried them to the woodshed. Not a soul came out there until after supper, and then it was Mister Walter there who slipped past me and went out there alone. I can't say how long he was gone, not more than ten minutes anyway, but Mister Dick never left the room this night. Now, sir, that's all I know about it, but Mister Dick, he never stole anything, and I'll stake my life on that, for I've known him ever since he was a boy."

## CHAPTER IX.—Dick "I Will" Is Cleared of All Stains.

A silence followed the words of the farm hand—a silence deeply oppressive and painful, and the men present looked into each other's faces, yet they did not say a word. They were the guests of Nathan Jones, and they could not very well appear against their host. It was indeed a very embarrassing position for them to be placed in, still what could they do? Walter spoke first, and it was merely shame that caused him to say what he did. Even then, his eyes were downcast, and he dared not look any one in the face.

"Well, for my part, I don't see how the tail could ever have worked its way into Dick's gamebag. I was in the room where all the bags were, but the reason I went there, was to get my knife. I left it there in the morning, and I missed it all day. It was only after we were home that I remembered where I put it. I had a long sliver under my thumb nail and I wanted to get it out. So that accounts for my being in the room where the bags were. Say, Dick," he broke in suddenly as if an idea had darted through his head. "You don't suppose you shot a black squirrel long about dusk, and in the uncertain light mistook it for a gray one? You know they are of the same size. That might be the case, you know."

"That will never do," Dick interrupted sternly. "I want you to come right out in plain English, and say that you believe me innocent. I will listen to nothing else. You know in your heart and soul that I never meddled with any of the bags, and if you don't end this watched affair, and end it mighty soon, too, I'll settle with you myself. And you've seen me punish a few fellows in the past, and so you know what to expect."

Walter's face grew a bit pale, for he had seen Dick punish severely one or two smart young chaps who had spoken falsely of him, and he did not care to receive the same treatment.

"Come, I am waiting, and I am not the most patient person in the world," Dick said impatiently. "If the evening's pleasure was to be ruined by the dispute between us, suppose we go outside and settle it, and not cast a shadow over the ending of the day's sport."



Dick was getting really angry now. His eyes flashed and he went nearer the coward, who hastily drew back in fear. He saw that he could dilly-dally no longer, so he resolved to save his own head, so to speak, for he did not relish appearing before the girls with a black eye or a swollen lip.

"I am sure a beg your pardon, Dick," very faintly. "I—I spoke impulsively, and if I had stopped to think, I never should have said what I did. We—we are all apt to commit blunders sometimes, you know."

Dick nodded, saying briefly:

"Very well; I accept your apology. But—let it be the last time you accuse me of taking an article that does not belong to me. You know when you said it that was a downright falsehood. As to how it got in my gamebag," his clear eyes meeting the other's shifting ones, "we will leave for a sharper brain than either yours or mine to solve."

That ended the matter. Dick "I Will" was cleared of the stain that only a few moments before had rested upon him, and the remainder of the evening was passed in the games and dances which all young folks enjoy so well.

## CHAPTER X.—"He Is Training Princess Bonnie, Father."

Walter did not speak to our hero again that evening. Of course, it could not fail to be noticed, and another strange thing was the absence of Edith Cross. She was not there, neither was her mother. Then the story of Hope leaving the Cross household, and making her home with the Rev. Joseph Cornell, had been talked over by the whole county, of course, being drawn upon and enlarged each time it was discussed. Yet nearly all the neighbors were in sympathy with the young girl, for they knew she had been a mere drudge, and all for a few scanty, worn-out clothes, that had once belonged to Edith, and the plain food that was grudgingly doled out to her. In spite of the fact that Major Cross was reported well to do, the Rev. Joseph Cornell held a mortgage on his farm, and had for years. Not that the kind-hearted man had ever told any one of it, nor did he even ask for his interest. When there was company present, Mrs. Cross entertained lavishly, and her table fairly groaned beneath its weight of good things. But once they had departed, the jellies and jams were securely locked up in the closet, the key stored away in her ample pocket. The fine china was banished to its dark corners there to await the arrival of the next visitors, the silver was carefully polished, wrapped in thick layers of flannel, and stored carefully away, not to see the light of day again until another state occasion. They were simply like hundreds of other farmers—great at making an outside show, but very poor home livers. It is a mistaken idea that farmers use the best of everything, when the truth of the matter is, the choicest of everything is sent to the city market. Skimmed milk is plenty good enough for the farm hands, says the housewife, with cream bringing such a big price in the city. Tender spring chickens are too dear to place upon the table when there

are plenty willing to buy them, and there is salt pork in the barrel for the men who possess such appetites. So it is with fruit. Dried apples left over from last year take the place of great ruby-hued berries and juicy melons. New potatoes are shipped and sold, for old ones, no matter if they are strong, do just as well to fry. Do you wonder that the farmer is always complaining of indigestion? The only marvel is that he lives so long. So it was with the Cross family. And Hope, our dainty heroine, found a vastly different home with her friend Della.

"Dear child, I am only too glad to have you here as a companion to my wild girlie," the clergyman had said very gently, "for she needs one gentle and mild such as you, to subdue her natural gay spirits. I welcome you to your new home, the same as I would a beloved daughter, for you are to be my daughter from now out."

"Glory!" Della cried, dancing about the room, too overcome with joy to stand still. "Glory, Hope, only think of it! You are to be my sister, my own dear sister, and we'll have no end of fun here now! I——"

"Hush, hush, my child, do not let your spirits run away with you," her father broke in. "Remember that this dear child takes the place of one long since gone out of our lives, but not our memory. She can never outlive that," his voice trembling. "She would have been about Hope's age, too, for you, I should judge, are a trifle older. But we will not speak of that now, for it clouds our newly found joy."

Thus was Hope welcomed to her new home, a far different welcome than she had received at the Cross household. And life seemed bright and cheerful to her at last. For the first time she was really happy. Mrs. Cross did not ask her to come back, though she would very much have liked to. When it was too late she saw her mistake, for she was obliged to hire an extra girl to do Hope's work. Even then she growled because of the labor she was compelled to do, saying it was the hardest place she had ever worked in. As for the fair Edith being asked to dip her dainty fingers in dish water, such a question was unthought of. Thus a year passed away, nothing out of the usual run happening. There were sleighing parties, skating contests, in fact, all such sports that are popular in country towns. And through it all, Dick never for a single instant faltered in his resolution to gain his point. He did not say much, but he was none the less earnest. He kept his plans to himself, and some days Nathan Jones believed he had given up all hope of getting the education he craved, but he did not know him. Dick "I Will" had gained that name honestly.

Walter, however, kept a closer watch upon him than did his father. In the first place he was shrewder, and he was insanely jealous of our hero. He was determined to stop him too, if it were possible. So when Dick believed that he was alone, Master Walter was sneaking around watching and listening. Dick used to retire to his room very early, but that was not strange at all, for it had been his habit for years to do so. Those hours after his day's work was done were the only ones he had to study, and he made good use of them.

One night Walter made a discovery that filled him with glee. His narrow jealous nature re-



joiced, and he hastened to his father with the startling news.

"I've just found out what makes him sneak off to his room so early every night, father," he cried with a chuckle. "I never got onto it before; now I see through the whole business. Do you know what he's doing every single night of his life?"

"No, I can't say that I do," the farmer answered in some surprise, looking up from his paper over the tops of his glasses. "What's he up to now? Some new scheme to get away to school?"

Walter nodded his head.

"He's laughing to himself, thinking he will beat us yet," he said. "But he don't know that I found out. He is training Princess Bonnie, father, in the hopes of winning the prize at the County Fair this year. He hopes to win the purse. But that mare will never win. Some night, though, I shall follow him on horseback, and just satisfy myself if there's any good in her. If there is—well, I bet I'll fix it some way so that I'll get her. I've always wanted a good horse, but I never thought she would amount to anything. Why, don't you remember what a poor, sick, wretched colt she was when you gave her to him? I never thought she would live. She's a beauty, no mistake about that, but the next thing is, can she run?"

## CHAPTER XI.—"I Will Block His Little Game."

Nathan Jones was silent for a few minutes, his withered face wearing a thoughtful expression. Then he looked up at his son.

"So you're sure he's training her?" he asked, stroking his grizzled beard. "It never struck me before that he was, but now come to think of it, I shouldn't wonder a mite. Well, as you say, she's a regular beauty, and no mistake. If I had any idea that she would turn out to be any good, I would have stopped to think before I ever gave her to him. But she was such a sick-looking beast that I was glad to get rid of her."

"Yes, I know, but what is that to us now?" Walter asked. "If he trains her well, and enters her in the race, and she happens to win, what will he do with the money?" "He will have the money to buy himself a new suit, and enough left to go to school and become a gentleman of himself. I hate him too much to let him do that," saying his last words with a sharp, snapping sound; "and you know he has only another year to work for you, for his price now is smaller by one half than it was a year ago. Oh, he is a shrewd one, I tell you."

Nathan Jones laughed outright, as if a happy thought had occurred to him.

"Well, I've got it now!" he said, heartily, and he laid down upon his knee. "And he can't get out of it, even if he wins the race. I will block his little game, I will, or my name ain't Nathan Jones!"

"What do you mean, father?" Walter asked, looking puzzled, yet eager. "I haven't the faintest idea, but hurry and tell me."

"All right, but better after all than young ones, don't you think?" the farmer chuckled in evident glee.

"And I'll bet my coin money, every dollar of it, that you would never had even thought of such a thing. Ha, ha, ha! Your old dad knows more in one minute than you'll know in your whole life."

"I see no sense in your keeping me waiting so long, father," Walter remarked impatiently. "Why don't you tell me what you refer to, and have done with it?"

"Now, don't you crow too loud, sonny," the farmer retorted, for there were times when his son's attempt at airs made him angry. "Please remember that your old father is doing the talking, and if it wasn't for him where would you be?"

Master Walter calmed down a bit. He knew when he had gone too far, and he dared not offend his father, for he was not capable of earning his own living, and he was well aware of the fact. So he waited in seeming patience, yet longing to get up and leave the room.

"I ain't asleep, though a good many smart young folks think I am," the farmer said, slowly, lighting his pipe and puffing away at the tube of discolored clay, for Nathan Jones was too thrifty to indulge in anything but a clay pipe. "Now, you listen to me. If Dick enters that mare and she wins the race, what do you think I am going to do? Of course he will offer to buy his time of me, and all that. Well, sir, I shall put in a bill for stabling and feeding Princess Bonnie for three years!"

Walter looked at his father aghast. Mean as he was, it was such a petty trick that it took his breath completely away; and yet he was glad to hear it, for it would serve to defeat his rival. He always looked upon Dick as his rival, though why he should I am unable to say, poor Dick never thought to outrival any one. He had gone on in his own way, thinking no ill, no evil of any man, woman or child. All he wanted was to accomplish his object in life, and he felt that sooner or later he would do so.

"Well, father, you have a good, long head, and no mistake," Walter finally said, a gleam of admiration at the elder man's shrewdness shining in his pale eyes; "that is the best thing I have heard in many a day. How did you happen to think of it?"

"Never mind how I happened to think of it," his father answered. "But don't you say a word. You just let him go on training the mare, and pretend that you know nothing about it. Let him enter her at the County Fair races, and when he springs it on me that he's ready to pay for his last year of time, I'll just spring it on him about Princess Bonnie's board bill for three years. On account of her having won the race he'll be more than anxious to enter her again next year, and before he'll part with her he'll give up going to college for another year. Oh, we can fix him all right. But, by golly! if that mare is any good, I'll have her, or my name ain't Nathan Jones!"

## CHAPTER XII.—The Nutting Party, and Hope's

Farmer Nathan Jones and his son Walter slept better that night than they had for many a week. They felt secure in the belief that they had fixed the matter.



of our brave Dick "I WILL." Ah, how little they knew the character of the boy with whom they had to deal. As usual, that night he had Princess Bessie out for her gallop. He knew the value of a good horse, and he had raised her up from a colt. No one knew the hours he had passed in nursing the small, sickly animal. But now he felt that his efforts were about to be rewarded and all would be well.

"They little dream what a gold mine is in those slender, graceful limbs of yours, my beauty," he said, stroking her velvet nose with loving hands. "Ah, but we have looked there! And how we will look there again. It has been a hard, hard struggle, but in the end we have conquered. And one year from to-day will see you in a luxurious stable, your own private stall made of polished hardwood, not this rough dirty hole, the meanest, poorest corner in the barn. And your master will be something better than a peasant boy! Ah, well, my princess, time works many a wonder. We are not the first to come up from the stable to the palace nor will we be the last. Brace up now, for a good girl, for we are off for our usual spin."

The intelligent mare seemed to understand all he said to her, for she picked up her sharp ears, and tossed her dainty head. Then he led her forth, her small iron-shod hoofs making no sound on the straw-covered floor of the big barn. On in the moonlight, he vaulted into the saddle, and as lightning later was riding swiftly toward the hills where he always exercised her. Ah, but it was rare sport, dashing onward in the silvery moonlight, feeling that sliding sides between his legs, knowing full well that in this dainty creature he had a small fortune. The horses he bred, the dreams he dreamed, for youth is full of hopes and dreams, and we know those but once.

Dick was very quiet over his plans for his gallant little mare and himself, for if she failed to win the race, then his hopes for the future would be shattered also, for upon her speed and strength he depended entirely. Walter Jones chuckled wisely when he saw our hero taking his horse out for a gallop over the hills, and when his teeth he vowed that he would never win the great race of the year, for in that part of the country it was considered a great race.

"Go on, my little girl, and win that mare to your heart," he said, "and you will matter, with an evil smile. "It is all the good it will do you, for she shall never win the race. And I never, and when I take an oath of my word, I require a good deal to break it. Now, the black banner, look out for yourself and for your mare, too!"

Dick did not know that he had been watched, and he did not know that some of his best friends were watching him. He was very carefully watched, every motion, every word, every look, and every thought. After the big race there was a very happy time, followed by a lot of fun of many kinds, and many more games and amusements. And as good luck would have it, the great prize of Barnville was won by the very best of the race for their cutting party. In a large room, just the other side from the kitchen, the tables were loaded with

like satin beneath the sun's warm rays. There our party intended to pass an entire day, starting early in the morning and returning in the evening. There would be lunch and a jolly time taken all in all.

The start was made from the home of Nathan Jones, because it was nearer the grove than any other residence about there. And it is safe to add that not a single boy or girl missed that cutting party. It was clear, crisp and frosty, when they started, and the girls were all glad to wrap themselves in thick, warm woollen shawls. The lone six and eight-seated wagons were already waiting for them, and oh! what a jolly day they would have! Our boys and girls, born and brought up in New York City, know nothing of the sports and pleasures of their country brothers and sisters. As good luck would have it, Dick was in the same wagon with Della Cornell and Henry. I need not add that Frank Spencer found a place there also.

Amid shouts of merry laughter and careless, happy chatter, the thoughtless party drove away, the cracking of the long-lashed whips, the rattle of the wheels over the rough roads, sounding above the many fresh young voices. The sun was just beginning to glow red and rosy in the east, and a bright hoar frost covered the dead brown grass and withered leaves that lay in sudden mounds in the fence corners. It was quite a drive to the grove, and before the day's frolics would begin, breakfast must be cooked and eaten. Not that it was at all needed, for everyone had partaken of the morning meal, but it was such fun to cook over a glowing fire beneath the morning sky.

The sun was high before they reached the grove, and while the boys were unitching the horses from the wagons, the girls busied themselves in preparing the breakfast in true gypsy fashion. It was eaten amidst much merriment, and then when the dishes were washed and packed away, the young folks wandered off in search of the brown, tempting nuts, whose flavor cannot be equalled by any other nut that grows. Reader, have you ever been "beechnutting?" But of course you have, so I will leave it all to your vivid imagination and to memory. No boy or girl brought up on a country farm ever misses the chance to go "nutting." As for nuts, you may have done it at about this time. I am truly sorry for them.

Gradually the young people parted off to wander, each couple wandering in different directions from the others. Although Walter Jones had the best to say of the ride of pretty Della, he was very disappointed, for Dick was sitting at her side, while Frank Spencer and pretty Della Cornell wandered off together. So Master Walter had to content himself with the society of Susie Martin, a stupid, red-haired girl, whose open adoration for him had long been a standing jest among his companions. Poor Susie was at first in a perfect heaven of rapture, for she believed that he had preferred her to the most graceful girl she ever met, but she soon realized her mistake by the most cruel and mean manner. At all on the way, she only saw him to her very plainly, and the day she had looked forward to as being so bright, was dull and gloomy enough.



Not so with our hero and pretty Hope. At first they were both inclined to be silent and somewhat reserved, but gradually that feeling wore away, and they were soon in the merriest of moods. Neither the young girl nor her companion ever forgot that day, and for the first time Dick "I Will" had the smallest basket of any in the crowd, a fact which was greeted with shouts of laughter when the party met that night. It was in the middle of the afternoon that Hope wandered off a short distance from him, catching sight of a large tree well laden with choice nuts. The warm sun had dried the dead leaves, and not a sound was heard in the grove.

Dick lingered behind her for a few moments, having found a rare nest of the nuts, and then missing her, he arose from his knees to go in pursuit of her. As he did so his heart gave a great leap of terror, and then seemed to stand still, for only a few yards distant, standing like a statue, her face whiter than death itself stood Hope, her eyes fixed in terror upon some object directly before her. Our hero's eyes sought that object, and the very blood within his veins seemed turning to waves of ice while his limbs grew numb, for in front of her, its horrible head waving from side to side, its forked tongue darting swiftly back and forth, its little fiery eyes glowing, was a huge rattlesnake! No wonder that both Hope and Dick were both powerless from fear and terror, for the loathsome reptile was all ready to spring upon the helpless girl and bury its deadly fangs in her body. It was so near her, that she could not escape even had she not been terror-stricken and dazed. God help her, it seemed that she was doomed. No power upon earth could save her from her awful fate.

### CHAPTER XIII.—The County Fair.

A hundred different ideas darted through our hero's head like keen-edged flashes of lightning. He had no weapon, there was none near at hand, and what was he to do? To the last hour of his life Richard Barker never forgot those few brief fleeting moments that seemed to his tortured mind like so many years. He lived a lifetime while he stood there, each instant expecting to see the snake spring upon its helpless victim. His first impulse had been to rush forward, and throw himself upon the young girl and the reptile, but a second later he saw that such a move would endanger both their lives. A cold sweat broke out on his brow, and his teeth chattered together.

"My heavens!" he muttered, hoarsely. "What shall I do? What shall I do? I can't save her, I can't!" As the full meaning of the terrible peril the girl he loved was in, he clenched his hands and cut into the flesh.

"I will save her!" he panted, his eyes flashing, his heart full of fire. "I will save her if I die the instant later. Oh, Hope, Hope!" What would he live for if you should be taken out of my life?

His sudden, frenzied desperation he could not hide. If there was a stone or some kind of a weapon with which he could be enabled to defend himself. And he could hardly suppress

the cry of joy that arose from his thankful heart when he saw a heavy, knotted stick lying upon the ground close beside him. One mighty bound, and it was in his strong hands while new life and hope sprang up within his breast. The icy coldness that had enwrapped him, gave place to warmth and fire. Never stopping to think of what the result might be, he gathered his muscles together, and with a swift, agile bound was upon the hideous serpent. His face was actually bloodless, his eyes gleaming, his teeth set, and he never expected to see another sun rise or set, but he would not have drawn back for all the world. Wild horses could not have held him.

He was never able to tell how it happened afterwards, but the heavy stick came down with crushing force on the snake's head, leaving a long, horrible, writhing body lying in convulsive agony upon the ground. It was a full moment ere he realized what had happened, and then a sudden weakness overcame him, and he thought he must surely fall to the ground. But he chanced to look at Hope, and the sight of the young girl's white face and swaying figure gave him a new strength. He was just in time to catch her in his arms, for another instant would have seen her lying beside the serpent whose victim she had almost been. And as she lay there in our hero's arms, her flower-like face pillowed against his broad shoulder, all he could compare her to was a frail, white lily.

In a few moments she opened her eyes and looked at him, first shudderingly, fearfully, as if expecting to again meet the glance of those small, fiery orbs whose baleful gleam had fascinated her. A shudder of horror swept her slight figure from head to foot, for the ordeal through which she had passed could not soon be forgotten.

"You are safe, Hope," Dick whispered in her ear. "So do not tremble so. I will protect you from all and every one of life's rough blasts, the same as I have to-day. Hope, Hope, my dear little girl, you ought to know how dear you are to me!"

Aye, she did know, but her natural shyness kept her silent. Her heart was throbbing thick and fast, but her lips were mute and yet the pressure of those strong, warm arms about her, the clasp of his firm hand sent a thrill through her maiden bosom that she had never known before. The girl did not say anything in answer, and soon it was time to start for home.

They reached home safely, and nothing more was said concerning Hope's narrow escape or Dick's heroic act. It was all the County Fair. Nothing else was talked of, nothing else was thought of. It would last three days, and to surrounding country people those three days were one grand long holiday of pleasure. The third day was the race, to be sure quite a different affair from the Handicap or the Surburban, but it created fully as much interest in and about Burrville, as either of the two named. It was all excitement, for there was a good-sized purse up.

Not a whisper, not a lisp had been heard that Dick had entered Princess Bonnie, at the Jones' farm, and the boy's heart beat high with hope and happiness, for he wanted to surprise them. Then too, he feared treachery should they learn of it too soon. Hope's father and mother were



exhibition, and the young girl was amazed at the praise they received. She had never taken a lesson in her life, but she was a natural born artist. It was as easy for her to draw as it was for the other girls to write, and the little sketches she had made during an idle hour, bade fair to make her a name and a reputation as an artist.

The fair was a grand success. In fact, there had not been so successful a one for many years. This year everything seemed to go right. The cows and horses were sleeker, fatter, more contented looking and juicy, and it seemed as if every housewife had outdone herself in the way of patch-work and pickles. But best of all, was the last thing—the race of the year! At last the shrill whistle of a trumpet announced the coming of both men and horses. The starter, who had once witnessed the Brooklyn Handicap, believed in "doing things up in city style," as he expressed it, and since that time the trumpet had played a prominent part in every race. He was a very dignified person, and highly respected by the citizens of Burrville.

Out they came, one by one, all wearing his own favorite color, and last of all came Princess Bonnie, and her young master. He wore national colors—red, white and blue. It was a great surprise to everyone, and many arose in their seats with wide open eyes and gaping mouths. They had not dreamed of seeing Nathan Jones' bound boy in the race, and with such a horse. Why, the mare was a perfect beauty. From her dainty hoofs up to her sharp-pointed ears she was a model. No wonder the crowd stared and stared.

"Waal, by gosh, she's a durned fine critter," was heard on every side. "And whar did he git her? She's worth money, I tell yer."

Princess Bonnie seemed to understand her own worth, for she tossed her dainty head, the ribbons in her mane fluttering gaily, and then as Dick vaulted lightly into the saddle, lifting his cap gracefully to the cheering crowd, the bell was sounded, the horses formed in line, and after just so much waiting and fussing about, the start was made. Princess Bonnie took the lead and kept it up, very easily, and as the cheers grew louder and louder, Nathan Jones grew ghastly, while his son did not look much better.

"By golly," the farmer muttered thickly, "I wonder if that durned fool of a boy has made a mistake. I'll bet a dollar he has, and we've ruined our own horse!"

"It is Princess Bonnie, as sure as you're born, father!" Walter gasped. "Why—why——"

"Yes, it is Princess Bonnie, and you've gone like the darned fool that you are, and given the pills to the wrong horse!" the farmer sputtered, almost beside himself, "and now that beggar's mare will win the race, and we'll be so much out, for that mare will never be any good again after that infernal drug goes through her system. Hang the boy! I wish I had attended to the thing myself."

"It's too late to cry over spilt milke now," Walter said. "He'll come out ahead, you see if he don't, for that mare is sure to win. If I hadn't been afraid of her, I'd never have mixed with the pills. She was too dangerous a customer to let alone. Now she'll be able to go to school and come out better."

The patient Princess Bonnie kept up the pace

all the way round. Not for a single instant did she lag behind, on the contrary each stride forward seemed to infuse a new life and vigor into her sleek limbs. And the crowd in the grand stand shouted until it seemed as if their throats must surely burst. Every eye was fastened upon the bits of well-known well-beloved colors—red, white and blue—and every pair of lips silently prayed that the gallant little mare would win. And their prayers were answered, for, with a sudden outburst of speed that amazed even her owner, Princess Bonnie sprang forward, her eyes blazing, her nostrils dilated, every nerve beneath her satiny skin aquiver. A great shout went up from both men and women, and then like a gaily colored flash, the brave little mare shot by the winning post the victor by a full head!

Such cheering was never before heard upon the fair grounds of Burrville, and both Walter Jones and his worthy father would gladly have throttled the noble mare and her youthful owner, for the prize was his. He had won at last, and the way seemed clear and full of hope. But alas! how little he knew of what lay before him. Oftentimes when the star of hope shines brightest, the hidden storm clouds are darkest and heaviest. But who can describe the workings of fate. To-day may be all sunshine; to-morrow all clouds, and we alas! poor mortals, must bear it all in silence and patience.

Yes, Princess Bonnie had won the race of the year, and our hero felt richer and prouder than any king, for now his hopes would be realized, his ambitions gratified, and he could be a man among men. The only two persons present who did not join in the cheering were Nathan Jones and his son, who both sat near with scowling faces. Their sullen manner was soon noticed, and there were smiles upon every face.

"They take it rather hard, eh?" went from one to another, "and after all the years the boy has worked like a dog, too. One would suppose they would of course be glad to see him get on in the world."

"That's not the style of Nathan Jones," another near neighbor of the speaker's replied. "And they say that the son is just about like the father, if anything he's meaner."

"Well, Dick will soon be free now, for I can tell you that the purse he's won to-day ain't no very small sum. Whew! but how friend Nathan will fume!" the other laughed. "I'm mighty glad to see the boy rid of him, for he's the hardest man in the country to work for. Mean to his help even when he pays no wages. And poor Dick only had his board for his work. Why I've seen that boy ready to drop when he'd come in from the field, and then that old catamount always had extra work for him about the stables."

It was easy to see how our hero stood with all the farmers in and about Burrville. They all liked him from the oldest to the youngest, for his kindness of heart and his struggle to accomplish his ambition was known far and wide. Many a man with means would have sent him to school, but Nathan Jones knew his power, and wickedly refused. Perhaps he would not have been so bad were it not for his son Walter, who was so jealous of our hero.

Dick was happiest when he reached the



pered congratulations of pretty Hope White, and his heart throbbed while his boyish face flushed. And then the distinguished-looking stranger whose life he had saved, came up to him, his hand outstretched, his kindly face aglow.

"My boy, your pluck has won, and the purse is yours. In five years from to-day, I shall expect to read of Richard Barker as one of our leading young men, and I shall not be mistaken, either."

"Thank you, sir," our hero answered, modestly. "I shall surely do my best, and I will not fail for the want of hard work."

"Hard work is the best thing in the world for a young man," and a shade of sadness swept over the fine face. "That is the right kind of hard work. And," with a deep sigh, "the best thing to cause one to forget."

Dick looked at him curiously. He had wealth, position, in fact, everything that the heart could wish for, and yet he was not happy. His life seemed shadowed by some deep sorrow, and his face showed it too. Boy though he was, Dick could read in his eyes that his heart was sad and heavy.

"I shall never forget your kindness to me, sir," the boy said suddenly, why, he was never able to say, but a queer impulse caused him to say it. For some unknown reason he had always felt drawn toward this man, who was so far above him in everything.

#### CHAPTER XIV.—"I Know All, and Yet, I am Willing to Forget All."

Dick returned quietly to the farm and went about his task as though nothing of importance had taken place that day. Walter did not even look at him, but sat sulking all the evening. His father, however, could not contain himself and at supper he remarked sulkily:

"I suppose you feel mighty big and set up because you have won the race to-day?"

"No, sir, I am not at all set up, as you put it," Dick answered in a respectful tone, but with a smile which he strove to conceal. "It is but a trifle, however, that I don't feel proud of. Besides, Bonnie when she has shown herself to be such a fine mare. And then I also take a little money for her training."

"Yes, and a fine way you took to train her," Walter broke in. "Sneaking off nights without a word to anybody. I would never have done such a thing."

"I had no other time to train her," was Dick's prompt reply, "and my time was my own when my tasks were done for the day. As for telling you or your father, why should I? You would have planned to stop me in some way or other."

"Don't forget your manners, sir, because you've won a little money," Nathan Jones retorted, wrathfully. "You will please remember that I taught you all you know, and for my wife's sake I don't want to hear of you sneaking off at night, sir. Dick looked at the farmer, and his answer was silent."

"I shall be ready to start at any time in the world, to-day," was the calm answer, and he looked him full in the face, never for a single

instant flinching. "I might have something and be where I ought to be."

"You would be still in the place I took you from, and I'm sorry now that I didn't let you stay there," savagely peeling an apple. "For of all the ungrateful cubs that I ever saw, you are the worst. Where did you get the mare that won you the race to-day? Who gave her to you?"

"I must admit that you gave me the noble mare whose speed to-day was the means of changing my whole life, and making my future," Dick answered, promptly. "But—do you remember why you gave her to me? What was she then? A sickly, weak colt whom no one, not even I, believed would live. I cared for her, nursed her out of pure, simple pity, for I could not bear to see her suffer. And even had she never amounted to anything I should still have been glad to do as I did. Then when I saw there was something in her, I made up my mind to train her, and enter her for the race. How well I succeeded, you are able to see for yourself. And while I must thank you for the gift of the colt, yet to myself alone I am grateful for what she has proven to be."

"That's it," the farmer growled. "You're like all such young cubs, filled full of selfish ingratitude. But look here, you owe me for that mare's board, just three long years. I ain't going to keep no fancy horses for nobody for nothing, you can bet on that."

"Will you kindly tell me what you consider me indebted to you for?" the boy asked, his lips quivering, for he knew well what to expect. "It might just as well be settled now as any other time."

"Here, Walter, since you're good at figures, you just add it up," the farmer said, for he and Walter knew the exact amount of money Dick had in his possession, and they determined to get every dollar of it away from him. "He knows what it will cost him to buy his time of me, so add the mare's board and keep to it."

Dick sat silent while Walter, with a grip upon his face, added up a long column of figures that seemed to have no limit. Poor Dick! How suddenly the bright future appeared to have grown dark, and all hopes forever more dead. At last Walter handed the paper to his father who first carefully adjusted his glasses, then slowly read it. A moment later he looked up and smiled, shaking his head, remarked with a grin:

"Well, Dick, I'm afraid you won't go to school this year, for the mare's board and your time takes every dollar you've got."

"I expected as much as this, in fact, it only equals the treatment I have always received at your hands. I understand this scheme perfectly, and I am sorry for you—sorry from the bottom of my heart that a man should stoop so low as to rob a boy. But I bear you no ill-will, for I know all, and yet I am willing to forget all, since I am to leave the shelter of your roof for good and all."

With these words he left father and son alone together, and for the very first time in their lives they were both ashamed of their own conduct.

#### CHAPTER XV.—Another Disappointment.

Poor Dick! He did not close his weary eyes in sleep that night, for his disappointment was too



keen, too sharp. To think that after all his hopes and plans, he should have failed. Oh, it was too bad! So upset and nervous did he become that he arose from his sleepless pillow, and slipping from the room, went to the stable where his pet mare was comfortably crunching her oats. A soft, low whinny of delight greeted him, and a velvet nose was rubbed against his arm. The boy wound both arms about her neck, while a few hot tears fell from his eyes.

"Ah, Bonnie, my beauty, how you do love me!" he whispered, and the mare, as if understanding all he said, neighed softly.

For some time he stood there in silence, his arm about her neck, and she rubbing her head against him. The sweet scent of the hay in the lofts above floated to him, and the restless moving about of the cows was not an unpleasant sound. It was so quiet, so still out there, and every dumb beast was so safely sheltered from the night and cold. They had roofs to cover them—aye! They had homes while he was homeless.

"Oh, beauty it is hard to be homeless and friendless both," he murmured. "And you, ah, how you would hate me if you knew what was in my mind only a little while ago. Poor as I am, lonely as I am, I know you would far rather be with me on a bed of straw with the coarsest of fare than be owned by the richest man in all the world. And yet I thought of parting with you for money in order to gratify my ambition. How you trust me, Princess Bonnie, how you trust me!"

Suddenly he again started, a bright smile breaking over his face.

"At last," he muttered. "At last. He will take you, Princess Bonnie, and you will live like a queen until I can once more claim you. I will see him to-morrow morning early, and there will be no more barriers before me. Thank Heaven for the thought!"

After seeing that the mare was all right he went back to the house, and turning himself, dressed as he was, toward the parlour, soon saw that a parcel of clothes. He was going to the school, and he had to leave it at the school. He didn't get through. Then he had found a way out of his troubles, and all appeared bright and fair. He was up as early as ever the following morning and went about his work, saying nothing whatever of his intentions. But after breakfast and the work was done, he quietly made his way to the Pines where Richard Cadwell lived, and of the family footman who answered his ring, asked permission to see the owner of the place.

He was not refused admittance, and while he sat in the big hall looking about him in wonder, he thought that he had never ever read of such a magnificent place and he stood, wondering if he could ever be the owner of such a grand old house. A few minutes later the man returned and politely informed him that Mr. Cadwell had just arrived in New York, and had taken his departure for New York about an hour ago. So there was nothing for him now Dick had to go away again, and he went away with a lead within his breast. It seemed that he was doomed to disappointment for ever, for the butler told him that none of the servants at the Pines could say when their master would return, for he never left word with them as to when he would come or go. His return

was very uncertain and poor Dick returned to the farm, his eyes hot with unshed tears. Both he and the Princess Bonnie were now homeless and friendless.

He did not go to the house, but made his way to the barn. That was his nook of comfort as he always called it, and whenever the world seemed colder, harder than ever, and his pathway rougher than usual, he did, indeed, find comfort out there among the placid, large-eyed cows, and the satin-coated horses. Somehow those dumb friends appealed to him more than the most of men with whom he was associated. For he knew they all loved him, and that it was an honest, pure love.

Dick indeed found comfort with his beloved Princess Bonnie, and he stroked the velvet nose fondly. The dainty mare seemed to understand what he meant when he whispered to her that they were both homeless and friendless, for there was a world of sympathy in her bright eyes. Still she could not comfort him entirely, and with a deep sigh, he left her alone and wended his way to the house—the house within whose walls he had never known one hour's happiness.

## CHAPTER XVI.—A New Friend.

Dick was indeed sick with despair. It seemed to him as though fate would not let him succeed in any undertaking, no matter what it might be. The walk back to the farm, which he must soon leave, and which had been the only home he had ever known since he left the Orphan's Home, was longer than the trip to The Pines. Then he had been in the best of spirits, his heart was light, and every cloud seemed to have been swept away from his pathway forever.

"I don't know what to do," he said, despairingly, suddenly halting in the middle of the road, his head bowed, his young face grave and drawn.

He stood for some moments in silence, too heavy-hearted to move on, and then the beauty of the scene, every object seeming to smile to him. A new hope sprang to life within his breast, for how could he fail, he asked himself. No great battle was ever won without a hard, hard fight. He was young, and life stretched out before him. Others had overcome the barriers that blocked the way, why then should not he? The sun shone brightly over his head, and the bare, brown fields took on a new beauty. He threw his head back, and walked briskly on to the farm, bravely determined to face the future without flinching. Walter Jones was in the yard.

"I've been thinking since you went out, Dick," he said, slowly, avoiding the boy's eyes, "and since you seem to be so set on going to school, I'll make you an offer. I don't suppose you'll do it, but maybe you'll look at it in the right light. Now, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll take that mare off your hands. Of course, she won't be much good to me, but I can sort of work her in for a third horse, you know, in haying and in the spring week. I can't afford to give you much, for it's money out of my pocket; but I'll give you five dollars. I'm anxious to help you, and I'm sure you'll



to help yourself. Now, what's the smallest price you'll take for her?"

He did not notice the strange expression that came into Dick's eyes, and the boy's face was very sober as he answered calmly:

"I leave that to you, sir. Surely, you ought to know what such a mare is worth. You have lived longer than I have, and you have had more experience than I have with horses. You may set the price."

Nathan Jones grinned, and his eyes twinkled greedily. He smacked his lips once or twice as if rolling a very sweet morsel under his tongue. Then he drawled:

"Well, as I said before, I can't afford to give you much, but I'll do the best I can. The critter will be dead property on my hands; still I can work her in for extra work. She'll eat her head off, too, during the winter, but I'll give you a hundred and fifty dollars for her."

Dick's lip curled.

"You are too generous, sir," he replied, half mockingly. "How can you do so well by me? Now here is my answer—one hundred and fifty thousand dollars would not buy Princess Bonnie—aye! before I would let her pass into your hands I would kill her! Your offer is an insult, and if the worst comes to the worst, we can starve together!"

The farmer's face turned a dull red.

"You are an ungrateful puppy, sir, that's what you are," he retorted, "and I'll not have you under my roof another hour! Take your mare and get out this very instant or I'll set the dogs on you!"

"You won't have to do that, Mr. Jones, for I am only too glad to go," our hero replied. "I've got nothing from you that I did not earn and I expect nothing. Go, I will, and I shall never cross your threshold again."

Dick turned away without a word and started for the barn where his mare was, the farmer following behind him.

"I'll see that you don't take anything that don't belong to you," the latter growled. "And why, if there ain't the minister!"

It was true. The Rev. Joseph Cornell was driving slowly down the hill towards the farm house. He was up before the gate just as Dick came out leading Princess Bonnie, all his worldly possessions wrapped in a small bundle and slung over his shoulder.

"Good-morning, parson, how be you?" the boy asked agreeably, hastening to meet the new-comer.

The clergyman answered him kindly, but briefly, and then turned his attention to Dick.

"Why, my boy, what is the meaning of this?" he asked in his pleasant voice. "You look as if you were going on a long journey?"

"And so I am, sir," our hero replied with a sad smile. "I do not know how long it will last, but time will tell."

"Why are you going forth in this manner?" the parson questioned, a perplexed look coming into his face. "You won a goodly sum of money the other day at the race, so I am told. Why not use some of it to present a better appearance?"

"Because I have used every dollar of it to pay a debt," was the clear response while the farmer

moved about uneasily, "and I have to begin all over again. The dear, noble horse," patting his mare's neck lovingly, "won me money enough to accomplish my object in life. We forgot, however, that her board for three years had to be paid."

"Ah, I understand now," and the clergyman looked hard at the farmer. "You are both homeless and penniless. Be kind enough to fasten Princess Bonnie behind and get in here beside me. You are going home with me until we decide what to do. Brother Jones," rather severely, "I will call again to see you. My present visit was not of very great importance. Good-morning."

## CHAPTER XVII.—The Last Hope Gone.

When Nathan Jones saw Dick drive away with the Rev. Joseph Cornell, he felt smaller than he had felt for many a day. He was very angry, too, but he managed to hide it.

"Drat the boy, anyway!" he muttered, shaking his fist after the pair. "He's always getting me into trouble, and I wish to Heaven I'd never bothered with him. Of course, the minister had to come just at the wrong time. Now, he'll give me a lecture about the sin of being greedy, the very next time I see him. Well, I only took what belonged to me."

"Got it in the neck, that time, didn't you, dad?" remarked Walter, who was near by, and had witnessed the entire affair. "The old chap gave you a look that would freeze a stone."

"Shut up!" growled his father, glaring at him savagely. "You are the one that started the whole business, and I have to face the music. Confound you, I have half a mind to take that whip to you, big as you are!"

"Well, you were pretty well paid for facing the music," retorted the son, "and as you give me the credit of putting up the whole business, what's the matter with giving me a part of the money? I have honestly (?) earned half of it, I think. You had to face the music, to be sure, but then you didn't have to dance, so hand over part of the dough."

"I'll make you dance, you young sassbox, you!" roared the farmer, making a grab for the large whip that hung on the wall. "I'll learn you that I'm your father, sir."

"I have learned it long ago," Master Walter sung out, but he was careful now to put a goodly distance between himself and his father, for when Nathan Jones was fully aroused, he was an awful man despite the fact that he was a "pillar" and deacon in the church.

"They're all a bad lot," the 'pillar,' that upheld kindness (?) and generosity (?)," he remarked, wiping his brow with a huge, red handkerchief. "And all they want is my money. But I'll fix them. Not a durned cent will that cub of mine ever get, if he dares sass me again."

Not very choice language for the pious Deacon Jones to use, and regarding his own son, too. But as my young readers must know, even a "pillar" sometimes loses his temper. Meanwhile Dick, with his new friend, was slowly driving homeward, and as they rode along through the clear, fresh air,



in response to the clergyman's earnest questioning, the boy told the story of his life from the very hour that he entered the Jones farm house up to now. The kindly man listened in silence, every now and then gravely shaking his head.

When Dick had finished they had reached the parsonage. Two fresh young faces were at the window, and as they saw who their guest was, both disappeared as if by magic. One to hide itself in the shadows of the room, the other to appear at the door, which was flung open with a bang.

"Oh, Dick, how glad I am to see you!" Della cried, giving him her hand. "Come right in this very minute, for Hope will be as pleased as I am."

"We have a new addition to our family, my dear, in fact two of them," her father laughed. "Give them both a most royal welcome."

"Indeed, I will," the girl answered eagerly. "Dick, you are going to be my brother now, oh! what a tyrant of a sister you will find me!"

"I do not fear you," our hero replied, his eyes dim, and a big lump in his throat, for he had not expected such a kindly welcome.

"But first of all let us take care of Princess Bonnie," he said, laughingly. "I never allow any hands save mine to touch her. You know we are the best of friends, and I really believe she would not eat her oats if anyone else gave them to her."

"She would eat them from a certain pair of fair hands that I know of, I am sure she would, and you know it," the merry girl retorted, with a wicked look. "But go on and make haste for Hope and I have been trying our hand at cake-making. We want you to try a piece, and—we both pity you from the bottom of our hearts, we do."

He led the mare to the neat tables, and in a very few moments was back in the house with the kind friends who made him feel at home at once. There he saw the fair girl whose sweet face he was destined to see every-day for some time to come. That day was one long to be remembered by Dick, and in the evening after tea, the clergyman requested a short interview with him in his study.

"I know your ambitions, my boy," he said kindly, and I am going to help you. "Now, I am not a sporting man as you must see," smilingly; "but I intend to indulge in a bit of it for a time. Will you sell me Princess Bonnie for any sum you may need or wish, allowing her to remain with me here? Whenever you wish, you may buy her back, and I promise you that I will take the best care of her."

Dick's eyes filled with tears, and for an instant he could not speak. He understood perfectly well what the good man meant him that offer. He did not want to hurt his feelings by offering him the money outright, so he took that way.

"You are too kind, sir," he finally managed to utter huskily, "and I feel as if I ought not to accept it."

"That is a very foolish way to look at it, my boy," was the grave reply. "You must accept it. I insist upon it!"

At last all was over. The clergyman gave him a good night kiss, and the boy went to his room. He found a letter waiting for him, and it was from his father, who had just arrived in New York State.

Within two weeks he was ready to start, and while he was overjoyed at the prospect of accomplishing his object, he was sorry to leave the kind friends and the only happy home he had ever known. The last evening there was never forgotten. He was to go away in the early morning, and while all were merry and gay, yet a sadness hung over all, for parting ever brings a cloud over the fairest ray of sunshine.

He slept well that night, and was up bright and early the next morning. Everything was in readiness. His trunk stood in the hall all packed, even to a huge cake that Della had baked for him, and which she declared would kill anyone within a week. He had put on his overcoat, and just before he drew on his gloves, he went to get the money from the nook where he always kept it hidden. Suddenly he started back with a sharp cry of surprise, for the money was not there!

## CHAPTER XVIII. —Fire!

For one moment Dick thought he must surely be mistaken or dreaming, and he searched the tiny cupboard again, this time more thoroughly than before. But no, he was not mistaken. It was not there. Faint, sick, dizzy, he reeled away, wondering if it were not some horrible dream from which he would soon awaken with a sigh of relief. Oh! what evil fate was it that so persistently pursued him? Ten years seemed to have been added to his age as he went slowly down the stairs, and he walked like an old man. The clergyman looked up at him in surprise.

"What is the matter, my boy?" he asked, going quickly toward him, for he knew that something had happened. "You look as if you had seen a ghost."

"It's gone," the boy answered, hollowly, sinking into a chair as he spoke. "The—the money is gone!"

His friends stared at him, not thoroughly understanding him, and then the clergyman spoke again, this time very much excited:

"You mean that your money is gone? The money you received for Princess Bonnie?"

Dick could not speak for the big lump that stuck in his throat, but he simply nodded his head.

"You must be mistaken, oh, Dick, are you sure that you have looked well for it?" Della asked.

"I kept it in the little cupboard in my room," the boy answered, faintly. "I was sure it was there, and I know where it was kept, and I am sure I took it in the fact that it is gone."

"Then we must search high and low," said the clergyman. "Come, girls, both of you, go over the house and look well after every nook and corner. There is no time to be lost."

Every corner of the old-fashioned parsonage was searched, but not a sign of the missing money was to be found. It had disappeared as completely as though the ground had opened and swallowed it up, and the strange part of it all, there was no one to suspect. Old Martin, the faithful servant, who had been with them for years, was not to be trusted, of, for the good



that would as soon have respected his own child. At last they gave up in despair, and sat facing each other in the pleasant sitting room where they had spent so many pleasant hours together.

"I can't understand it," poor Dick said, his lips white, his eyes hopeless. "Not a living person knew where I had hidden it, and now it is gone!"

"Well, my boy, it cannot be helped now," the clergyman answered, with a sigh. "The only thing for us is to wait a few days and see if we can find any clues. Then if we fail, we can try another plan. I am sorry you cannot go to-day; but if you think best, I am willing to advance another sum so that you may go on."

Dick's face flushed hotly.

"Not for the world," he replied in a low voice. "I am going to stay right here until I hunt down the thief, and I will not fail!"

"I am glad to hear you say that for it shows that you have not yet given up in despair," the clergyman said, with a smile. "I greatly feared that this last blow would prove too much for you, but I am glad to see that it has not."

"You have paid me once for Princess Bonnie, sir, and that is quite enough," our hero remarked, with a ring of sadness in his voice. "And I shall have no peace day or night until I find the coward who robbed me. If I never go a day to school I will find him, rest assured of that!"

And so he would. While his heart was almost broken by his great loss and his courage well nigh crushed out, yet he would not for a single moment falter nor rest until he had found the thief, one or ones, whichever it might be. But he realized that he had a hard task before him, and he could not help sighing. Before retiring to his room that night, as he sat alone in the dusk, a soft little hand was thrust gently into his own, while a sweet voiced whispered:

"Dear Dick, I wish I might do something to help you. You do not know how my heart aches for you."

"And so you can help me, Hope," he answered pressing his lips to the rosy fingers, "by giving me your love and friendship. That will be more to me than anything the world might give me. It is a gift I prize more highly than gold or diamonds."

"You know you are sure of my love, Dick," was the answer, and he was well satisfied with it.

But then, feverish and broken were his dreams that night. He was in constant trouble, always in danger, and yet just at the very last moment Hope, the sweet, white angel, always came to his rescue. Suddenly he was awakened by the sound of voices, the patter of feet running up the stairs, and springing from the bed he ran to his dressing room, even in his half-dressed condition he hastily dress himself. Then he ran down the stairs only to be met by the girls and the clergyman, who half frantic with fright did not know what to say. The moment they saw him, they rushed to his aid.

"Oh, Dick!" they cried. "The thief is here!"

Running to the front door he found it open, and a man was standing there. There was a flash of light, a report, a crash, and the man, who was a thief, was gone. The moment they saw him, they rushed to his aid.

to defy the power of the thief. His first thought was of Princess Bonnie. Heavens, but she must be saved. It was sure death to go into that roaring, seething furnace, but he could not, he would not let that beautiful animal perish. He sprang toward the heavy doors that were already in flames. In vain did his friends shout to him to come back, but he never heeded them. He was bent upon saving his horse. One single instant he paused and looked wildly about him. Then his eyes fell upon a heavy beam that lay close by, and seizing it with one mighty blow he battered down the doors. A cloud of black smoke gushed forth, almost blinding him, but he bounded within, and ran straight to Princess Bonnie's stall.

"Bonnie!" he called, softly, and the mare ceased the wild rearing and plunging at the sound of that beloved voice.

A second later an extra woolen blanket was wound about her head, and still talking to her in that soothing voice, she followed him out of the stall like a dog. Her own blanket protecting her satiny sides from the shower of sparks that fell like hot snowflakes about and above her. But would horse and boy ever live to reach the open night outside? It was something awful in there, and yet on and on they fought—one fearing, the other trusting.

Those outside waited with beating hearts and silent prayers upon their lips. Ah, how long each passing instant seemed to them, and how rapidly the flames gained headway! It was almost impossible for any human being to live in such an atmosphere; yet they hoped and prayed. Would Heaven answer those prayers? Alas! There was a sudden, sullen roar, a mighty crash, and then the building, every timber still ablaze, tottered, and fell like a groaning, living thing.

## CHAPTER XIX.—Between Life and Death.

A cry of horror went up from the group who stood breathlessly watching the mad leaping flames, for by this time the fire had been seen for miles around, and every man in and about Burrville had hurried to the rescue. One glance sufficed to reveal that they were too late, for no power upon earth could save the minister's stables. Those present did not know that Dick had entered the burning building, and they were surprised at the cries of horror and dismay that came from the lips of the clergyman and the two girls, for he was a rich man and could well afford the loss of his property. Of course they realized that his kind heart was filled with sorrow at the thought of the unfortunate animals within that fiery furnace meeting with such an awful death, and yet he would never have allowed any one to tell his friends of his secret. No one knew that he was there, and they were all surprised when they saw him.

"Dick!" he called, softly. "Dick! He is in there!"

A sudden flash of light, a report, a crash, and the man, who was a thief, was gone. The moment they saw him, they rushed to his aid.



"My God! the boy is dead then!" a man's voice cried, sounding queer and unearthly above the roar of the flames. "He must be, for no human being could live in that pit of fire! and we can't save him! Great Heavens, we can't even get his body out!"

A groan went round—a deep groan of utter despair—and then a shrill, piercing shriek in a girl's voice arose above it—the sweet voice of Hope White, now so harsh and strained that not one there recognized the musical tones of the fair girl.

"Dead!" she wailed, her slender form swaying from side to side like a reed in a strong wind. "Dead! Oh, Dick—Dick!"

And then, as that beloved name died upon her white lips, she sank fainting to the ground, her beautiful face whiter than it ever would be again even when she was lying in her coffin. Della knelt down beside her with a cry of alarm, and raised the bonnie, helpless head in her arms. She feared she was dead, too, for she was so frail, so fair, so fragile—more like a flower than a flesh and blood mortal.

"She is dead, too!" she sobbed. "The shock has killed her. Oh, Hope, my dearest sister Hope, open your eyes and look at me! Speak to me, Hope—speak to me!"

But no answering glance came from those closed eyes, over which the snowy lids were closed—no word left the ashen lips. It did indeed seem that the girl who loved brave Dick "I Will" so dearly was dead. Just then the clergyman interfered. He too knelt beside the prostrate form lying upon the frozen ground and shook his head sadly.

"We must get her into the house without further delay," he said slowly, his voice husky with emotion. "For——"

He never finished the sentence, for a sudden wild shout filled the air—a shout of joy, wonder, so glad and triumphant that it caused him to spring to his feet again; and it came from many throats—a shout that he never forgot to his dying day, for there before him, just emerged from the fiery ruins beneath which he believed both brave Dick and Princess Bonnie to be buried, they stood, the woolen blankets that were wrapped about them, burning in a dozen different places.

He could scarcely believe the evidence of his own eyes, and that picture never left him. He loved to be an old man, and after his days of toil were ended, and he sat upon the vine-wreathed porch of his house, his grandchildren clustered about his knee, he would tell them again and again of how their father saved the noble man he loved so well, at the risk of his own life. They never wearied of hearing it, and it was a pretty scene, the saintly looking old man with his child-like faith and trust, waiting for the hour when he should join the wife of his youth beyond the River of Glathness, the silent little ones, open-eyed, awed, eagerly listening to every word. Ah, no, such scenes are only too rare in this busy, cold world of ours.

A dozen men rushed forward, a dozen pairs of hands were outstretched to catch the badly wounded boy ere he fell to the ground, while the nurse was quickly led away to a place of safety. Fortunately Dr. Spencer was present, and he was able to

administer to the sufferer. Dick was almost overcome, but he managed to gasp out ere he fainted:

"I—can save—no more. Tell—Hope I—am alive. I——"

Faint and low as his voice was, it reached the ears of the girl, and brought her back to life once more. She opened her eyes just as they bore him into the parsonage, and knew that he lived. And oh! what a prayer of praise and thankfulness went up from her heart when they told her so. But alas! she little knew how near death he really was. Yes, it was true. Brave, noble Dick "I Will," was indeed so severely burned, that at first Dr. Spencer shook his head gravely. He never left his bedside all that night long, and tears stood in his eyes, strong man though he was; as he witnessed the agony of the sufferer. But he bore it like a hero, and the kindhearted physician bent over him, whispering huskily:

"My boy, you should have lived in the olden times, for you are the material that heroes were made of. You will pull through in spite of all. Another boy would have died."

And so they fought the grim battle—reientless Death and Dick "I Will."

Night after night the boy ground his teeth in silent agony vowing that he would live, he could not, would not die.

"I will live!" he muttered. "For I cannot die! I must live for Hope!"

Never did a suffering youth have a tenderer, gentler nurse than the girl who watched over him day and night. The mere sight of her sweet face was better than medicine, so the doctor laughingly declared, and when the fight was ended, and Dick out of danger, he realized that but for her, strong though he was, he could never have recovered.

## CHAPTER XX.—A Happy Surprise All Around.

It was indeed a happy day when our hero was able to go to the dining-room for the first time. In honor of his recovery, Della planned a little surprise for him, and he entered the bright, warm room, leaning a trifle heavily upon the clergyman's arm, he was greeted by a merry burst of laughter, for there stood not only Hope and Della, but also his friend Spencer.

"Welcome back to life and happiness, my dear old boy," the latter said gayly, but with a queer choking in his voice, and a dimness in his eyes, usually not there. "It seems good to see you about once more, I can tell you that."

"And it seems more than good to see you again, Frank," Dick answered tremulously. "It pays me for all I have suffered. I believe I would go through it all again for the sake of such a moment as this. A few true friends make the whole world to me."

"This is indeed a happy moment for us all," the clergyman said, very softly, "and to-night let us forget that there is such a thing in the world as care or sorrow. Let us forget all pain, all suffering, all wrongs, and forgive those who have wronged us as fully and freely as we hope He will forgive us for our transgressions. To-night we will pray for those who have sinned against us. Let this little repast ever be remembered by us as a feast of peace and good will toward friend



and foe alike. Friends, gather about the board."

In silence they sat down, and after a few simple words of grace, in which the good man earnestly thanked God for the recovery of one who was like a child of his own flesh and blood, the pleasant, ever-to-be-remembered dinner began. The solemn atmosphere, made so at first by the clergyman's words, quickly gave place to a mirth and cheerfulness. Merry laughter and lightly spoken words, ringing out upon the night, caused the passers-by to look wistfully at the bright eyes, and then hurry on with a sigh, at the thought of others being so happy while their lives were filled with woe.

Fate had indeed blessed those five people, who were gathered about that well-spread table. Life stretched out before the two brave youths, the fair, pure maidens, beautiful and bright. To be sure there had been clouds, but those same clouds had drifted away. And sitting there, facing each other, laughing, jesting, feasting, four young hearts throbbed faster as the tiny god of love touched them with his sweet-tipped arrow. Ah, cupid, yet ever welcome guest, although your presence is not seen by human eyes, the human heart knows when you are nigh! The good man whose life had been so clear, so white, so unblemished, he too was happy, and yet there was a sorrow in his kind heart—a shadow that he was forced to walk in alone, for there was no one to share with him. Still he was thankful that life was a rich as it was.

Suddenly there came a sharp peal at the bell, and the maid, after answering it, returned, saying:

"A gentleman to see you, sir."

"Did he not give you his card, Mary?" the clergyman asked, somewhat annoyed at being thus interrupted. "Strange that he did not do so. And did you not tell him that I was at dinner with a party of friends?"

"I told him that, sir," the maid answered. "And he said that he would join you if you did not wish to be disturbed."

The clergyman's brow contracted, while a ripple of laughter went round among the young people.

"He appears to be rather a peculiar person," and the good man was forced to smile in spite of himself.

"Do let him come in, papa; it will be such fun," Della pleaded, her bright eyes dancing with mischief. "Please—please let him come in, for to-night we are having such a good time, and it will be a regular lark."

"Daughter—daughter, do you let your merry little run away with you," the clergyman remarked in gentle reproof. "Mary," to the maid, "show the gentleman in. He will be our guest. And after you give him my message you may lay another plate at the table."

"Yes, sir," and she disappeared only to return a moment later, accompanied by the stranger.

The clergyman arose from his chair to greet the self-invited guest, extending his hand, saying cordially:

"You are welcome, friend, although I do not know your name. I——"

His words were cut off by the entrance of the stranger, who, with a look of surprise, stepped forward.

falling full upon his fine face and snow-white hair, revealed the fact that the self-invited guest was none other than Richard Cadwell, the wealthy owner of The Pines.

"Why, Mr. Cadwell, what a pleasant surprise," the delighted clergyman cried, wringing the other's hand cordially. "I did not dream that you were the gentleman who——"

"Was so prudent as to invite himself to dine with you," Richard Cadwell laughed gayly. "I must make you an apology for intruding thus, but the truth is I am here on a very pleasant errand."

"Sit down, my dear sir, and join us in our dinner," the clergyman said. "We shall rejoice with you, for it gives me happiness to see others happy."

What happened to change the once sad master of The Pines so? What sudden joy had come into his life that had the power to drive the expression of sorrow from his fine eyes, and give place to hope? It was marvelous. He stepped around to the other side of the table where Dick was sitting, and laying one hand upon his shoulder, said slowly, proudly:

"My dear Mr. Cornell, allow me to introduce to you my only brother's son, heir to a large fortune left him by his late father. Young ladies, young sir, my nephew, Master Richard Cadwell, called after his fond uncle—myself."

Need I describe—nay, need I try to describe, for I cannot really describe it—the scene that followed. Never before did the walls of the old parsonage echo to such happy voices as on that eventful night. It was a long story, and the errand that took the owner of The Pines to New York. He had always felt strangely drawn to our hero, and the first time he ever saw him he noticed the striking resemblance he bore to his late brother, whose only child had been stolen when a mere babe. Going to Nathan Jones, he learned all he could about him, then to the Orphan's Home, and on to New York, where he obtained all the evidence needed. So lo and behold! we find our hero, brave Dick "I Will," no longer the homeless, friendless wanderer, but Richard Cadwell, heir to a fortune, the size of which caused the citizens of Burrville to open their eyes in amazement.

While congratulations were being offered, Herbert down to pick up her handkerchief that had fallen to floor. As she did so the clergyman suddenly uttered a sharp cry, then took a step forward, his face ghastly. The young girl was so startled that she could not speak, but only stood staring at him, her eyes wide open—her red lips parted.

## CHAPTER XXI.—Unmasked.

Della heard her father's voice, and she too, was frightened. Running to him, she laid her hand upon his arm, crying out:

"Papa, what is it? Are you ill?"

"No, no; I—I," and he sank panting into a chair, his face pale as death, his hands trembling. "My child—come here."



The young girl obeyed him, wondering and half afraid, for she had never before seen the clergyman so affected. She came close to him while the others in the room looked on in silent amusement. He held out one trembling hand.

"Let me—see your—your locket, my child."

Still wondering, Hope reached up, and, unclasping the slender golden chain from about her white throat, gave it into the eager hand stretched out to receive it. Attached to it was a small golden locket in the shape of a star curiously engraved. It was an odd, frail ornament—one that would be noticed at any time or place. The clergyman's fingers trembled so that he could hardly hold it. Once, twice, thrice, he dropped it, and then setting his lips firmly, he pressed a spring so small that it could not be seen. The case flew open, and inside were two locks of hair, one a dark, rich brown, the other a bright gold.

A long, low quivering cry of joy burst from the clergyman's lips—a cry always remembered by those who heard it—a cry like that of a dreamer suddenly awakened from some horrible dream of torture and fright, and to whom the joy of awakening is the delight of Heaven—and letting the tiny toy fall to the floor, he sprang to Hope's side and caught her in his arms.

"At last!" he panted, half delirious with rapture. "At last my prayers are answered, oh, God! be praised! Look at me, child, look at me, for I am—your father!"

Again silence, but only for an instant. This time Della was the one to break the stillness. With a shout like a young savage, she danced about the room, crying out:

"I knew it, I knew it. I always felt it in my bones. I told you, Hope, that you seemed to be my sister from the very first time that I laid my eyes upon your face. Oh, but I could sing for a week without stopping, and dance, too. Come, come, papa, stop hugging Hope and tell us all about it, or I shall begin to get jealous."

By this time they were all sufficiently composed to sit down and listen to the story. It was a strange tale, more like a story one reads, than a page from plain everyday life.

"First of all tell me, how long have you had this locket, my child?" the clergyman asked, anxiously.

"Ever since I can remember," Hope answered. "It is the first object I ever remember seeing, so I must have been very small. Sometimes they used to come to take it away from me, but I always cried and they gave it up. It has been about my neck ever since."

"The same," the clergyman said, with a sigh of content. "Della, my child, where is your locket? Have you it about your throat?"

"Yes, papa, I have it," Hope answered. "I cannot say," the clergyman replied, "but at the same time, when I saw it, I felt it was yours, and giving to him a locket exactly like Hope's. 'Thank goodness I did, however.'"

"I am glad you did so," said the clergyman. "Then he opened the locket."

"The locket contains a lock of your dear, dear mother's hair, and also one of my own," the clergyman said, "and I have been with

emotion. "See, they are just alike, the coils of gold in each, the lock of dark brown. Heaven has restored you to my arms, dear child, and when I had given up every hope of ever seeing you again. When you were a child your nurse disappeared with you one day, and that was the last time I saw you. We never could find the faintest trace of either, and we believed you were dead. The blow killed my dear wife. She pined and died at last of a broken heart. Ah, if she might only have lived to look upon the face of her beloved child again! But I must not rebel. Thy will be done, oh Lord, for Thou art indeed kind to me, Thy humble servant. My daughter," smiling half sadly, "you are just one year younger than your sister. Your birthdays come on the same day. Friends," turning to those assembled, "we have double cause for rejoicing this night. Ah, who shall say that life is not blessed, and earth a heaven of happiness?"

Such a happy night was never before known by any one of those gathered within the walls of the parsonage, and right merrily did they celebrate it in good, old-fashioned country style. But there was more happiness. In the midst of their pleasure came another ring at the bell. This time it was Hiram Gregg, the man of all work as the Jones' farm. He was accompanied by Walter Jones, who looked shame-faced enough. The farm hand was evidently very angry, for his face was flushed, and he carried a heavy whip. He led Walter up before the clergyman.

"Here he is, parson," were his first words, "and here's the money he stole from Dick there. I knowed he took it, and I jest followed him to-night and saw where he hid it, so I jest took this 'ere whip, and you kin see fur yourself. He's got to tell the truth, or I'll lick him so that his own dad won't know him. Why don't you lick him too, Dick?"

"No, he has been punished enough, Hiram," our hero answered. "Let him go. It may be a lesson to him and in the future be the means of making a man of him."

"I hope he will reform his ways."

Walter Jones was beaten at his own game, and only too glad to get out of the trap so easily. He went abroad very suddenly, and it was many years before he was seen in Burrville again, and Edith Cross lived and died an old maid. She had been bitterly disappointed.

Reader, you know the rest as well as I do. There is no need for me to say more, save this: In a magnificent residence not far from The Pine, there is a sturdy youngster of three years, who says "I will," to every one and everything, and is the handsome dashing man known far and wide as a great criminal lawyer, whom he calls papa, we recognize our old friend, Dick "I Will." Thus the curtain is rung down upon one of life's dramas, and now comes the blessed peace and rest of perfect happiness.

Next week's issue will contain "LARRY OF THE LANTERN; or, THE SMUGGLERS OF THE IRISH COAST."

Aunt—Is your letter about the same? Small News—I am glad to hear that you have decided to move.



## CURRENT NEWS

### FINDS AN \$8,500 PEARL

According to an official report issued by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labor of the Mexican Government, Jorge von Forstal, a veteran pearl fisher of Lower California, has found a seventeen and one-half carat pearl valued at 17,000 pesos (\$7,500).

Pearl fishing in the southern portion of Lower California, about the port of La Paz, which has been dormant for some time, boomed as a result.

### HORSE KILLS ITS OWNER

Giles Goodell, 78, hermit farmer of Lakeport, on Oregon Lake, N. Y., is dead as the result of being trampled under the hoofs of one of his horses. His body was found beside the wreckage of a stoneboat. The horse, which had been attached to it, was running wildly about the farm.

The antics of the horse attracted the attention of John Michaels, a neighbor, who found the body.

When Mr. Michaels saw his neighbor last Goodell told him he was going to haul some debris on his stoneboat.

### OLD BUT SPRY

William Mackay, of Sydenham, an outlying district of London, is eighty years old, but that does not deter him from celebrating his birthday in a Spartan manner. No cakes and candies and feast days of Mr. Mackay. On the morning of his eightieth birthday William arose at 5, and, leaving the rest of his household peacefully sleeping started on a twelve-mile walk to the Highgate Bathing Ponds. At 8 o'clock he was in the water, and, to use his own words, "as fresh as a daisy."

This energetic Londoner celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday in the same way, and intends to do the same thing at eighty-five. He is very glad his birthday falls in March. "I hate summer bathing," he says, "there's hardly room to kick. Whereas in March there's no crowd."

Another wonderful Londoner, though of a slightly different type, is Mrs. Gambrill, aged seventy-four, who has just resumed her dancing lessons, after an interruption by a trip to Monte Carlo! Mrs. Gambrill is ambitious. She is not satisfied with modern fancying, and so has taken up a course of ballet dancing, toe dancing and physical training.

## LOOK BOYS, LOOK!

Did you know that "Mystery Magazine" now contains more stories than it ever did? And they are crackerjacks!

Just to show you, read this list of contents for No. 156, on all newsstands:

### "THE MEDICINE DROPPER"

A detective novelette by G. P. WILSON

### "WITH EYES AND NOSE"

A two-part story by RALPH E. DYAR

### "WHAT DOES YOUR HANDWRITING TELL?"

A special article by LOUISE RICE

### TRAPS FOR THE UNWARY"

An article by POLICE-CAPTAIN HOWARD

### AND THESE STORIES AND ARTICLES:

"STICK TO YOUR PRISONER," by Jack Beckett; "THE STRUGGLE," by Clifford Mottishaw; "THE SHADE'S MYSTERY," by D. W. J. Campbell; "TRAPPED BY CHANCE," by Joe Burke; "THE CAGE," by Hamilton George; "THE CRIME DETECTOR," "ROBBERIES INCREASE IN INSURANCE RATES," "TRUTH SERUM," "MENTAL CURE FAKERS," "FIND ALLEGED SWINDLER," "JAIL PRISONERS GET NARCOTICS," "THE METHODS OF SCOTLAND YARD" and "SECRET SERVICE WARNS OF COUNTERFEITS."

The Biggest 15 Cents' Worth on Earth!

GET A COPY!



— OR —

By WILLIAM WADE

(A Serial Story.)

## CHAPTER XXI.—(Continued).

"We must be off the track," said Mark. "Don't you notice how smoothly we are running."

They had been running along a steep bank on one side and a bluff on the other, and Dick had noticed just before the jar came that they were rounding a decidedly sharp curve at high speed.

In fact, it was seeing this that had made him speak as he did.

"There is something the matter," said Trix, looking out of the window next to which she sat, riding backward because Miss Tryphena could not. "There is something off the track."

"Something on it, you mean, child," sputtered the maiden aunt. "What is it? I can't see anything," twisting her head around in the vain attempt to see behind her.

"I guess you're right," muttered Mark, who sat next to Miss Tryphena, "but I can't tell what it is."

"There is a car down the embankment, one or two of them," cried Dick, jumping up. "Great Scott! I wonder if that is one of the cars that Lionel was in?"

"He was not on the train, was he?" asked Trix.

"Yes; in the car ahead of ours or the next to that."

"Then our car is gone, too," said Mark. "H'm! it is a good thing we all came in to breakfast at the same time."

The car ran on for some distance, and then suddenly stopped, the conductor coming along and saying:

saying:  
 "We've lost two or three cars, ladies and gentlemen, and if you occupied any of the last three or four cars I am afraid you will have to stay here for the present till we can find you other cars."

A wreck of one of the rear cars had broken and mangled it and two or three others at a bad place on the road, the coaches breaking their couplings and going over the bank at a bad part of the turn.

The forward part of the train had not stopped at the time the engineer did not know anything about the accident beyond feeling a decided jolt and that as he was rounding the curve, and it was not until one of the brakemen had seen the trouble and reported to the dining-car people that the truth of the matter was known.

When they at last stopped, with the intention of making head to see what could be done, the conference said that all who wished to get out and see what was going on, in the light of the injured, and to see that there were many, would not be a moment too soon.

"To think what we have escaped!" exclaimed Miss Tryphena. "Half an hour later at our breakfast, and we should have gone over with the rest. No, indeed, I am not going back, and if I see a good chance to go by some other road, I will do it. We have lost a lot of our baggage as it is, and as well go one way as another. I have had all I want of this road."

They all got out, standing around the little station at which they had stopped and where there were only a few persons, the train not having been expected to stop there.

"You are not going back, Mark!" said Miss Tryphena. "You may be able to continue on some other road. Isn't there one near?"

"Yes; I believe there is."

"Then take it. You must be able to get a carriage or some sort of conveyance. I am not going any farther on that train. Find out at once."

"I shall have to go back and inquire about it done," said Dick. "If you think you had better take another train, do not let me detain you. I must go back, however."

"That's all right, Dick," said Mark aside, while the aunt was trying to get some information about the other road from one of the hangers-on around the station, "she'll go with us on this road. We'll be only losing time to take another. Run back and see what you can do for the fellow, but if there is anything serious don't let the old lady know it."

"No, won't," said Dick, and now he jumped aboard the train, which was backing up at that moment so as to run down to the scene of the accident, a number of the passengers feeling the same as he did.

They went back to where the cars had rolled down the embankment and found a scene of the most indescribable confusion.

Some of the coaches had turned completely over and had rolled to the very bottom of a long steep embankment, others had stopped right side up about half-way down, and one was turned around and was on its side not forty feet from the torn-up tracks.

People had gathered from many points in the short time that had elapsed since the accident, and already some of the wounded had been brought up and carried off to the nearest houses, others being now in the act of being taken from the track.

Some one had gone to the next station back, it was heard, and word was to be sent to the nearest large town for aid, this being nearer than any other town ahead where aid could be obtained.

Dick looked in the car that was nearest to the track and recognized it as the one in which Ill-done had been, seeing the porter as he was looking in at the windows.

"Have you seen the gentleman?" he asked.

"He wen' fo' his breakfas' jus' befo' dis t'ing happened, sah."

"You have not seen him?"

"No, sah; I reckon he am in de dinin' cyar, sah."

"He may have been," thought the young fellow, "although it is strange that I should not have seen him."

(To be continued.)



# WEALTH OF NATIONS

United States .....	\$320,803,862,000
United Kingdom .....	120,000,000,000
Germany .....	Unknown
France .....	60,000,000,000
Italy .....	45,000,000,000
Japan .....	20,500,000,000
Canada and Australia .....	27,000,000,000
Belgium .....	11,000,000,000

An announcement by the committee said it was hoped that the prayers would have a good effect on the choices to be made by the two conventions. The prayers will be broadcasted by radio.

Thus far there has been great loss to cattle in the affected districts. In one instance a cattle has been strangled by the earth's movement without leaving a denture of about 250 inches.

The second double room and sitting room are the best in the house, and have been laid out with the best taste and judgment. After the Thirty Years' War the Earl of Arundel collected a library and employed the best names in the Atlantic world, and he was one of the founders of the University of Oxford. In 1700 he was one of the founders of the University of Oxford.

He added he did not recognize the burglars, although he thought it possible they might have been among clients he has defended.

HARRY E. WOLFF, President,  
100 West 24th Street, New York



# INTERESTING RADIO NEWS AND HINTS

## NEW RADIO INVENTION

Major Elwin H. Armstrong disclosed before the Institute of Radio Engineers a new radio invention, the super-hetrolyne, which he has so simplified that an amateur can operate it successfully.

With this receiver located in Maine and operated by a woman, London and Pacific Coast stations were received with complete audibility.

## PENCIL MARK GRID LEAKS

To adjust a pencil mark grid leak and increase the resistance, rub off some of the pencil line with an eraser. To decrease the resistance make more line. The adjustment should be made while the set is in operation. Increase and decrease the resistance until the signals are loudest.

## THE BATTERY SWITCH

In assembling a new radio receiver the constructor would do well to make use of an "A" battery switch. This is a simple, inexpensive little device, and will be found to be a very useful accessory.

There are only two binding posts on a battery switch, and the connections to them can be made without difficulty.

## SUPPORTS FOR SHELF

When constructing a two-tube amplifier or a receiving set, with a two-tube amplifier, use the jacks as the brackets to support the shelf on which you mount the socket and transformers. This may be easily done by removing the two machine screws that are in the jack and replacing them with longer screws and nuts. The jacks will then serve as excellent shelf supports and save you time and money.

## A RADIO WEDDING

A "radio wedding" is the newest matrimonial novelty. Otto Pradel, formerly of Harper, Neb., now a teller in the Illinois Merchants Bank, Chicago, and Miss Georgia Brooley of Wildwood were married while Station WDAP broadcast the wedding march from "Lohengrin," recently.

The bride's father, George Brooley, who is a radio enthusiast, arranged with WDAP to broadcast the marriage ceremony at 8 P. M. As the couple stood before the Rev. O. Schneider the strains of the march were repeated by the air waves.

As a surprise to the couple, WDAP followed the wedding march with "I Love You Truly."

## TO BUILD A WAVE METER

A wave meter may be made as follows: Mount a coil wound with No. 30 wire on a hard rubber panel and set a box large enough to accommodate it. Attach a honeycomb coil mounting on face of panel, connecting the terminals of the mounting to the variable condenser. Plug in a 50-turn honeycomb coil and wave meter is ready. Tune in a station, whose wave length is known, place the honeycomb coil in close inductive relation to the secondary, and turn the wave meter condenser. When the signal decreases, the wave meter is in resonance. Note this setting, and proceed in the

same manner with other stations. If the wave meter is desired for a transmitting set, include a crystal and phones, as in a common crystal receiver. Calibrate it with a standard instrument.

## RADIO BROADCASTING DISCUSSED

The problems that have been worked out by the radio broadcasting stations since the world began tuning in were discussed by W. E. Harkness, assistant vice-president of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company.

The public prefers first class symphonic music over all other, Mr. Harkness declared, though jazz by good orchestras comes a close second. This opinion is based on reports sent in from persons of all ages and material wealth, who are included in the 750,000 instrument owners within a 100-mile radius of New York. With each instrument having four listeners, he said, there was a radio audience of 3,000,000 within that area.

More and more the broadcasting stations must sell their services to persons willing to pay for the spreading of a message, Mr. Harkness explained, but the entertainment features would have to be kept up in order to hold the audience. WEAF, the American Telephone and Telegraph sending station, has had a quarter of a million requests for the sending privileges, he said.

## GROUND AND AERIAL NEED CARE

A few pointers regarding the installation of the receiving set should prove valuable to every owner of a radio outfit. As a matter of fact one need pay little attention to the installation of the simple sets for the reason that their simplicity limits their efficiency so that the finer details hardly apply to them. When it comes to the more expensive outfit, it is well to give a little thought to the installation for the purpose of obtaining the highest efficiency.

The receiving apparatus should be placed to permit the shortest possible leads from the antenna and ground connections. The leads should be as short as possible. Sufficient space should be provided between the instrument and the operating table to simplify the manipulation of the receiver.

The antenna leading from the lightning switch should pass through an insulator or through the wall. The ground wire, number 14 in size, should be brought in as carefully. If these two points are given the care they deserve a large amount of the losses incident to the average receiving set will have been overcome.

## FOR POOR TUNERS

The wave trap is becoming more and more of a necessity in connection with sets which do not tune sharply and in localities where there are two or more transmitters at work on almost the same wave lengths. Fortunately, the wave trap is a simple contraption and may be readily made or purchased complete at a low cost. The simplest kind of wave trap consists of a coil wound on a three inches in diameter, on which are wound ten



turns of No. 18 double cotton-covered wire to serve as the antenna circuit. Around this winding is placed a layer of insulation, say oiled muslin, and a winding of 35 turns of No. 26 double cotton-covered wire. This second winding is connected to the terminals of a 43-plate or .001 mfd. variable condenser. The first winding is connected to the antenna and ground, just the same as the receiving set. In fact, it is shunted across the terminals of the receiving set. Such a wave trap serves to "trap" undesired signals, which are tuned in for the closed oscillating circuit consisting of the second winding and variable condenser, there to lose themselves, so to speak, and not get into the receiver which is tuned for another wave length.

### SEALED RADIO SETS

A novel method has been adopted by the Australian Commonwealth radio authorities for protecting broadcasting stations. The regulations recently promulgated require that every prospective purchaser of a receiving set must present to the radio goods dealer a certificate of license showing that he has subscribed to the service of the station operating on the wave length to which the instrument being purchased is adjusted. If a radio enthusiast desires to listen in on additional programs he can have his receiving set so adjusted, but only on the production of certificates showing that he has made separate subscriptions to each. At a recent conference of Federal authorities, manufacturers, broadcasting companies, and dealers, the adoption of a uniform device for sealing receiving sets was decided upon. While the sealed-set regulations may be defeated by certain owners of receiving sets, the Government has authority to make surprise inspections of every set that the seals have not been tampered with. It is understood that the sealing device, which is added locally, will in no way interfere with the sale of American radio sets in Australia.

The WD11 will give as good results as the UV201A as a detector. It is only in the case of an audio frequency amplifier that the UV201A is a better tube. For detection purposes it is not advisable to make any change in tubes, especially since the economy in operation is considerably greater in the WD11.

No radio set in existence will cross the country any and every night. As a matter of fact, it is known that KHD and KFI are heard in New York, the metropolitan district. The super-heterodyne will not do this any quicker than the best of the tube radio sets, the first tube radio frequency circuit or the standard Armstrong regenerative set. The fact is that on each more than the number of tubes used in such a particular set.

A new type of "B" battery developed by the engineers of the Bangor Battery Company is now being put into production in such batteries. This battery has a longer life and more efficient power output than the standard No. 6 dry cell commonly used in the present circuit. The new battery is a 22½ volt "B" battery. It is 6 inches high, with

a base 2 inches square. The terminal connections are brass binding posts at the top. By an ingenious method of construction the fifteen cells, individually insulated, are placed in a vertical position in two inner compartments. These compartments are arranged one above the other, and the whole is enclosed in a non-metallic, non-inductive, waterproof container. The electrical capacity of the battery at two milliamperes is about 500 hours, which places it in the group of so-called medium-sized "B" batteries.

Capacity shields have been widely used in the past for eliminating or reducing the troublesome capacity effects in regenerative circuits. It is now claimed that capacity shields should not be employed, in that they decrease signal strength and broaden the tuning. Instead, the builder of a radio set should see that all instruments in the tuning assembly, such as coils, condensers, variometers, variocouplers and so on have the side next the panel and the shaft side connected with the ground side of the grid battery circuit. Audio-frequency transformer coupling should be grounded. Manufacturers of regenerative sets generally do away with shields by placing the inductance units some distance away from the panel, and using insulator couplings between the dials and the instruments.

Many so-called "bootleg" tubes are appearing on the market and are being offered at lower prices than the standard tubes. Furthermore, in general appearance these tubes resemble quite closely the standard tubes, and are said to have the same operating characteristics. It would seem that the independent tube manufacturers, despite claims to the contrary, could not produce tubes of the thoriated filament type, with extremely low current consumption characteristics, because of the inherent difficulty of making the special filament. Reports from users of independent tubes are generally to the effect that these tubes are not as satisfactory as the standard tubes.

A tube blocks up because of the wrong polarity of the filament battery, also known as the "A" battery. See that the prongs of the vacuum tube are making good contact inside the socket and bend the prongs upward a little bit, or try a new grid leak if the tube does not function properly.

The new Cunningham tube is a new vacuum tube designed for use as an amplifier or detector. The filament current is only one-fifth of that required by the CB11, and the long life of the tube is guaranteed. Care should be taken to prevent the plate voltage from being applied accidentally to the filament. There should be no other connections when the tube is being tested. The tubes are distributed during the following manufacture. This has no effect on the operation of the tube. Any tube which is believed to be defective should be returned to the dealer or distributor from whom it was purchased. The filament voltage of this tube is 1.5 volts. The filament current is 25 mA with a plate voltage of 20 to 100 volts.



# PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, MAY 7, 1924

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## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### LABORERS FELL LIKE TENPINS

Thirteen railroad workers are in the hospital at New Braunsfeld, Tex., and one or two of them will die as the result of a peculiar accident. The men were part of a gang laying steel near here and were being brought near here on a small trailer, pulled by a motor car.

At a curve near here, one of the men lost his balance and grabbed the man nearest to him. This man in turn seized the next man to him as he was being pulled off the car, this procedure continued until all thirteen had been pulled off the car. Several of them fell on their heads and received fractured skulls, while others received broken legs and arms and other minor injuries.

### COUGHS UP BULLET

W. V. Meadows of Lanett, Ala., believes in keeping his trophies for a long time. In fact, he keeps them so long that he can't always get rid of them when he wants to.

Meadows is now seventy-eight years old and is a veteran of the Civil War. He was shot during the battle of Vicksburg, the bullet hitting him in the eye. Doctors probed for it, but they were never able to find it nor did they feel that it was safe to perform an operation.

Meadows didn't worry much. He knew that it was in his head somewhere, and all that, but that was all he could do about it. The other day he was suddenly seized with a violent coughing spasm which he couldn't seem to overcome by the ordinary means.

Finally with a great effort he coughed up the bullet, the one that he was prevented with during the days of the Civil War. This bullet was in the form of a slug and weighed about an ounce.

### RATS IN HAWAII ARE COFFEE TOPERS

The islands and perhaps millions of sage rats in the Kona district of the Hawaiian Islands have become coffee toppers. They subvert wholly upon the ripe coffee berries and cause big losses to the

growers annually. Although the rats make coffee their sole diet they do not seem to be any the worse off, so far as their physical condition is concerned. They are sleek and fat and scamper about with an undue playfulness, their unusual activity being due to the stimulating activity being due to the stimulating character of the food, it is supposed. Coffee growers have so far been unable to cope with the rat pest.

The little animals swarm into the bushes when the berries begin to turn and eat and destroy enormous quantities of the product. It was not until some time after the growing of coffee in the Kona district was started that the sage rats learned to like the taste of the berries. Gradually the addicts increased until now practically every rodent, young and old, will not eat anything else. They even store away large quantities of the ripe berries to tide them over the intervals between crops.

## LAUGHS

"I enjoy your wife's playing. She has such a delicate touch." "Yes, she gets that from practising on me."

"Do you think a woman should get the wages of a man?" "It depends on whether she is married to him or not."

"John, ever since we've been married you've never seemed the same. What did I ever do to you?" "You married me."

"You ask my hand in marriage. Aren't you rather ambitious?" "Yes, but I always did strive for big things." From that moment his case was hopeless.

"What are the most important islands on the globe?" asked the geography teacher. And without hesitation the boy from New York answered: "Ellis, Manhattan and Coney."

"Johnny," the teacher asked, "can you tell me anything about Christopher Columbus?" "He discovered America." "Yes. What else did he do?" "I s'pose he went home and lectured about it."

Little Willie—Oh, Uncle George, did you bring your horn? Uncle George—My horn? Why, I have no horn. Little Willie—Then I wonder what papa means when he said you were off on a toot last week.

Little Tommy had spent his first day at school. "What did you learn?" he was asked on his return home. "Didn't learn nothin'." "Well, what did you do?" "Didn't do nothin'! A woman wanted to know how to spell 'cat,' and I told her."

"Waiter," said the traveler in an Elmer railroad restaurant, "did you say I had twenty minutes to wait or that it was twenty minutes to go?" "Nayher. Oi said ye had twenty minutes to ate, and that's all ye did have. Your train's just gone."



## PLUCK AND LUCK

### BRIEF BUT POINTED

27

#### NEW COFFEE SUBSTITUTE

A new substitute for coffee has been brought to civilization by a traveler just returned from the interior of Venezuela. He found the Indians of the Meta country toasting a bean called "Amazona," the product of a weed which grows in abundance and is said to have all the characteristics of coffee except caffeine.

#### SHAVES IN AIRPLANE

The difficulty of shaving in an airplane while flying more than 8,000 feet above the earth was experienced by Major A. S. Fletcher of the Philippine Scouts. In a hurried trip from Zamboanga to Manila he took his shaving outfit with him. Using lather, he attempted the job. The lather faded from his face in the gale as fast as he put it on, but he persevered and when he arrived at Manila showed evidence of having had a fairly good shave.

#### DUG HIS OWN GRAVE BESIDE HIS WIFE'S

Edward H. Kalbaugh, ninety-five year of age, who was found dead in his bed at the home of his daughter in York, Pa., last week, was buried in a grave which he helped to dig beside that of his wife in the cemetery at Dobb's Ferry, near Hanover, Pa.

It has been the desire of Mr. Kalbaugh to live to be 100 years of age, but when he was forced to retire from active work fifteen years ago he began making preparations for the time when he would have to leave this earth. He helped to dig his own grave beside that of his wife, he helped to build the grave and had a tombstone placed over it and everything was put in readiness for his death.

He has been living with his daughter, Mrs. Edward March, in York, and his death was due to old age.

#### DISCOVERS OLD RUINS NEAR MEXICO CITY

The remains of an old civilization have been discovered near Mexico City by Dr. H. L. Krober, of the University of California, near San Angelo, University of Mexico City. It is believed the ruins belong to the Aztecs.

The ruins were found in a field and a pyramid of ancient masonry.

The ruins were found at the base of a hill and were a part of the ruins which are believed to be a part of the ruins of the Aztecs.

The ruins were found in a field and a pyramid of ancient masonry.

The ruins were found in a field and a pyramid of ancient masonry.

they assumed when the molten lava overcame the early inhabitants of the valley of Mexico.

The new discovery proves that the early inhabitants of the valley were familiar with domestic implements and were also builders of important works.

#### INDIAN FAIRGROUND FOUND

The Indians who lived in the Southwest before the coming of the Spaniards left no written history, but they did leave much evidence of their manner of living, the nature of their dwellings, their occupations, customs and myths, revealed through excavations of their former habitation, often nearly obliterated by the falling of the walls and their gradual covering by shifting sand and earth. One of these prehistoric ruins is the Chama Valley, New Mexico, excavated by J. A. Johnson, of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Smithsonian Institute, is described in a bulletin just issued by the bureau.

"This ruin," says the description, "known as Po-shu-ouinge, meaning 'Calabash at the end of the ridge village,' is undoubtedly pre-Spanish, as absolutely nothing of a Spanish nature was found in the course of the work. The pottery discovered was of good quality and great variety, which is possibly accounted for by the tradition among the present-day Indians that the village was formerly a place where great fairs were held and there were many people coming and in other articles. The early inhabitants of Po-shu were excellent workers in wood and bone, the great number of objects of these materials found, including axes, knives, spear-heads, mortars and pestles, saws, bone knives, awls, needles and beads. A number of little squares and oblongs made of pottery were found, which is supposed were used as tallies in the various games played, or in a game similar to checker which is still played by the Indians of the Southwest.

"The people of Po-shu were farmers, as demonstrated by the seeds of corn, pumpkins and squash that were found, and by the charred corn discovered in a few of the ruins. The tradition also indicated that the people of the village came originally from some country to the North, whence they gradually migrated southward to escape the adverse winters. From the fact it would also appear that it was their custom to kill the men of their enemies and take the women and children as captives, being in many cases assimilated into the tribe. This would be a very early example of the process in the case of foreign types of pottery.

"It is not known just where the village of Po-shu was built or how long it was occupied, but there is good evidence that it was occupied very recently, the inhabitants being killed and by the process of the ruins, which are now being excavated. After the ruins were excavated, the ancient inhabitants of Po-shu were found, as well as the ruins of the village, which are now being excavated. The ruins of the village are now being excavated, and the ruins of the village are now being excavated.



## ITEMS OF INTEREST

## 5,400 LITTLE QUAKES IN JAPAN

Since the time of the great Japanese earthquake of September 1, 1923, Japan has had 5,400 lesser quakes, according to Dr. Nakamura, Japan's foremost seismological expert. These include minor disturbances registered on the siesmographs and not felt by humans.

In September, the month of the disaster, there were 3,350 shocks, 2,000 of which were plainly felt; in October, 1,069, of which 69 were felt; in November, 249, of which 59 were distinctive; in December, 234, of which 35 were felt.

January showed an increase over the last month of the previous year, 364 shocks having been registered during that month, of which 70 could be felt by the residents in the parts of Japan in which the tremors occurred. Again, February decreased, with only 128 shocks, 26 being distinct. March has had 59 shocks, all plainly felt.

## SOME INTERESTING OPERATIONS

A piece of needle about a quarter of an inch long that entered the hand of Mrs. Mary Northwick of Jamaica, N. Y., two years ago while she was ironing clothes has just been removed from her toe. Most of it was extracted at the time of the accident, but she later felt pains in her hand, and eight months ago, similar pains in her knee. A few days ago the pain had traveled to her toe and she called her physician to treat her for an ingrowing nail. He removed the bit of steel.

Charles W. Rife, employed as a mechanic in a garage at York, Pa., acted as his own surgeon when he sewed up a cut in the palm of his left hand with silk thread. Twenty-two stitches were required to close the gash.

Howard H. Cousens of Saco, Me., submitted to a remarkable operation in which a splinter which had been in his nose for twenty-five years was removed. When Mr. Cousens was eighteen he was operating an edging machine and a splinter flew from the machine, lodging in the corner of his eye. Suffering from headaches recently, he consulted a physician, who operated and removed the piece of wood, which was one-half inch wide, one and one-half inches long and one-thirty-second of an inch thick.

## ADIRONDACKS IN APRIL

The floor of the Adirondack forest is still covered with two feet of snow, according to trappers coming out of the big woods. On the north slopes of the mountains and ridges the snow is several feet deeper, although some of the exposed southern slopes are bare.

Although the fishing season opened on April 5, all the Adirondack lakes are completely covered by snow. Trout fishing, it is reported, will not be favorable in the Adirondacks until after the middle of May.

The trappers report that due to the mild weather in the last few days in March the beaver came out of their holes and took to the water. The result was that they caught more beaver during the

last three days of the month than in the rest of the month.

Nevertheless, fewer animals were caught than were expected. The trappers say that they are also disappointed in the prices, fur buyers offering on the average only \$18.50 per skin, whereas the trappers expected \$25.

The woodsmen report that scarcely any deer were starved during the winter. They were able to move about until late in February because the lack of snow. Late in March mild weather put a crust on the snow, enabling the animals to go about freely and browse on twigs and eat moss from tree trunks. The snow attained a depth of five and a half feet throughout the southern Adirondacks.

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# ARGENTINE GIRL TO ESSAY CHANNEL SWIM

Lillian G. Harrison, the twenty-year-old Anglo-Argentine girl who swam across the River Plate Dec. 22, the first person to accomplish the feat, hopes to set another record by being the first of her sex to swim the English Channel. She is planning, with the backing of the Argentine Athletic Federation, to leave for England in May and attempt the crossing during the English summer.

Enrique Tiraboschi, who swam the channel last summer and who accompanied Miss Harrison a part of the distance across the Plate, believes she will succeed in her new venture. The distance she had to swim across the big South American river was 26½ miles in a direct line, somewhat less than the channel swim, and, according to Tiraboschi, the channel currents are no more difficult to master than the Plate currents, though somewhat colder. Tiraboschi himself failed in an attempt to swim the Plate two years ago.

Miss Harrison won cash prizes of 7,000 pesos, two cups and a gold medal for her feat. She accomplished the distance in 24 hours 19½ minutes.

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